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MEMOIRS

OF

MRS. HANNAH MORE.

L. AND G. SEELEY, THAL [illegible] DITTON, SURREY

...BRANCH OFFICE...

W. Finden Sc.

Yours very sincerely
H Inae

From the Picture painted by Opie. in 1786.
now in the possession of Lady Henry Fitzgerald

Pub.d by H.B. Sealey & W. Burnside, 172, Fleet Street. Aug.st 25, 1834.

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE

OF

MRS. HANNAH MORE:

BY WILLIAM ROBERTS, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

PUBLISHED BY R. B. SEELEY AND W. BURNSIDE;
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MDCCCXXXVI.

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PREFACE

TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

WITH the third edition of Mrs. H. More's Life and Correspondence, the prefaces which accompanied the first and second were again presented to the Reader, because it seemed to the Editor that they contained certain explanations which it was of importance to preserve, and a new preface was added, not because the Editor had any fondness for this kind of furniture, but because he felt himself concerned in honour to defend both his Memoir, and the subject of it, from a critical assault which, though its motives were not less apparent than its ignorance, had yet on its side an imposing advantage in the language of assumed authority and magisterial self-complacency. An epitome of all these prefaces is now offered to the candid Reader, in which my friend the Quarterly Reviewer will not be forgotten. My friend, I repeat, in so far as to him I owe the opportunity of vindicating Dr. Samuel Johnson from praise, and Mrs. More from censure, where both the one and the other had its motive in wrong principles, and to say the least, a very questionable integrity of intention.

As the Publishers of Mrs. More's Life and Correspondence, exercising, I believe, a sound judgment, and grounding their opinion on much literary experience, have thought that a large part of the reading public would be accommodated by a reduced edition of the work, it has been determined to contract this fourth impression within the compass of two volumes, by the omission of whatever could be spared without injury to its connectedness and entireness, and without impairing its usefulness. The Edition now produced, is, of course, less comprehensive, and introduces the heroine with a thinner train of attendants, but perhaps it brings her with more singleness of effect before the Reader, more in her proper personality, and, if the phrase may be allowed, with her character more concentrated.

What is now purposed is to produce a work more strictly biographical, and in prosecution of such design, while all, or nearly all, of the letters of Mrs. More herself will keep their places, to admit only those of other persons which are necessary to make her own better understood, or which may conduce to the fuller illustration of her sentiments and opinions.

Whatever the Editor had added of his own to the first three editions, whether by way of narrative, and as a supplement to the correspondence, or for the more ample exhibition of the character of one so worthy of being set forth as an example, is entirely retained. To do honour to such a specimen of female excellence was worth the risk of incurring the censure of Reviewers. The public must judge how far the Editor is to be charged with presumption, and will proceed *with* him or *without* him in their progress through the work, as they may happen to estimate the worth of his interference.

The end proposed by thus shortening the work being

to present the subject of the Memoir more individually and prominently to the Public, it is hoped that the letters which will be missed in this Edition will not be supposed to be undervalued by the Editor, being omitted only on account of their looser connection with Mrs. More's life and character. Her principles and opinions as they proceed in their developement through the changes of her social intercourse and habits, and the several stages of her experience, are well worthy of an undivided attention, and afford lessons from which may be learned how religion specifically acts upon the heart, and what are its proper tests and indications.

After three editions of a literary work, each consisting of 2000 copies, have been absorbed within the first year of its publication, the good or evil report of mercenary criticism can be but of little importance; and if I take any further notice of the hostile article in the Quarterly Review, of which the ignorance and bad feeling have I trust been satisfactorily exposed, it is not because I have any resentment to gratify, but because it seems expedient that no edition of the Life of Hannah More should ever go forth without registering afresh so signal an instance of the motives which influence and determine these periodical criticisms, and make them such unsafe guides in a country, and in a state of society, so dependent on the right and wholesome regulation of public opinion.

To be called a 'narrow-minded sectary' by a man (for I wot the ladies have no such reviewer among them) who bottoms his creed upon the decision of what he sagely calls 'The rational and immense majority of the religious public,' is so trifling an injury as to make self-defence almost ridiculous. I am half-ashamed to have wasted a line in avowing my affection to my dear mother,

the Church of England, in answer to an accusation from such a quarter, but this critic's insinuations to the prejudice of Mrs. Hannah More are founded on such misstatements and perversions, as to make it very difficult for the most Christian equanimity to let them quite alone.

As the dishonesty of the article alluded to, has, however, in the Preface to the Third Edition of this Work been shewn in detail, it will be enough in this place to repeat that it has not been thought by this critic to be inconsistent with the character of a Reviewer to support a charge of anachronism by sinking a fact by which the dates of the transactions would have been clearly reconciled; to find fault with certain passages of a letter written *to* the Editor, as having been written *by* him; to direct attention in language of dubious import, to rumours set on foot by malignant gossip; to give a literal construction to words exchanged in a course of jocular contention; and to apply, without any colour for the surmise, to a person worthy of the highest respect, a sarcasm clearly intended for another, and which, to have been aimed at Mrs. More, would have tarnished the reputation of the great man by whom it was spoken. Such disreputable methods of attack are unworthy of being remembered, even to be despised, yet the wrong done to religion in denying its spiritual operation, and proper converting influence on the mind of Dr. Johnson, towards the conclusion of his momentous existence, against proof the most complete and satisfactory, demands that no new edition of Mrs. More's Life should appear without continuing the testimony borne by the contents of the Preface to the Third Edition, to the comfort of an evangelical faith on the bed of death.

In the great scene of Providential mercy, the high things of human attainment and distinction cast down

from their elevation, and brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, offer to the view of the real Christian a spectacle of great interest and wonder. And it is believed on no slight grounds, that in the case of Dr. Johnson such a spectacle presented itself. But, alas! our Quarterly Reviewer, who, since his notable article on Hannah More's Life and Correspondence will be esteemed perhaps but a shallow lecturer on divinity, sees nothing to admire in such an object. His wisdom being all his own, and very great in his own eyes, he cannot comprehend the value and the working of that other and better wisdom which shakes a man out of his dream of self-satisfaction into the clear conviction of the soul's peril, and the necessity of pardon through faith in the purchase of the cross.

The Editor's case is shortly this. Having found among Mrs. More's papers, a letter to which no name was subscribed, giving an account of our great moralist's wishes and feelings in his last illness, and his communications with a pious minister of our church, he felt it a sort of duty to give the letter to the public, being satisfied of its genuineness, from the character and style of its contents. From some motive or other, probably not very worthy of investigation, (it might be from malice or from caprice, or from a conceit that the memory of Dr. Johnson was appropriated, and that it was presumption in one not moving within a certain dogmatic circle, to intermeddle with the opinions of that distinguished person, or it might be from the quarrel which certain men, who build much on their own supposed *rational* superiority, have with certain religious opinions of a humbler cast,) this interesting letter has been scornfully treated by the Quarterly Review.

The "anonymous sheet" has been restored to its

credit by the discovery of the writer. To the names of Mr. Storry and Mr. Sangar, that of the late Mr. Latrobe is to be added, with concurring testimonies from the pen of Dr. Johnson himself, to establish the gratifying fact that his vigorous understanding ripened at length under the converting influence of Divine Grace, into that holy frame of humility which banishes every thought of personal merit, and gives to the Redeemer all his own glory.

These particulars respecting the last days of Dr. Johnson, did certainly not belong to, and therefore made no part of the Memoirs of Mrs. Hannah More, which contained only the letter of Mr. Sangar to Lady Lifford, in which the statement of Mr. Storry, concerning the application made to Mr. Winstanley for his ministerial service at the death-bed of the Doctor is set forth, in terms characteristic of the well-known principles and feelings of both those reverend gentlemen.

The attack of the writer in the Quarterly Review upon the credibility of the above statement, induced the Editor to take some pains to ascertain the authority on which it rested. He was anxious to ground upon facts which could not easily be resisted, the claims of vital Christianity to the testimony of one who having lived long in a sort of intellectual supremacy, acknowledged at the last that his only resource was in the support borrowed from that sanctuary to which Quarterly Reviewers, or the oracle on which they rely—"the rational and immense majority of the religious public," [1] do not

[1] If the treatment I have received has excited in me any resentment, this very silly sentence has put the pragmatical religion of this critic in so contemptible a light, as at once to execute and exhaust all my revenge. I cannot feel so angry with him as to wish him to stand in a worse point of view than that in which he has placed himself. This imposing example of the majority, was one of the arguments of the Church of Rome against those

know or care to know, the way, but which stands with open doors in the view of the penitent believer.

As the present edition is framed on a plan of compression, I must not allow myself to dilate on the controversy concerning the spiritual state of Dr. Johnson's mind in his last illness; but still the object of maintaining a fact connected with the highest truth, forbids that this subject should ever be touched without exposing unworthy endeavours to present it to the public under a false aspect. Readers may need to be reminded, that the plural style so gravely assumed by Reviewers is sometimes used to solemnize ignorance. Let them bear in mind, that what they find in these journals is not the collective sense of a profound critical consultation, but the single sentence of an individual writing for pay; generally in the spirit of party; and often of a person qualified only by temerity and self-sufficiency for the critic's office. When we read in the Quarterly Review, that all Mr. Latrobe's part in the affair was, that

who dared to set their individual opinions against the great body of religious professors, and worshippers after the Popish model. The Jewish Doctors, too, thought themselves unanswerable, when they contemptuously asked, "have any of the Rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" But let me not be misunderstood; to the authority of our National Church, I am among the number of those who pay a most willing and filial obedience, founded on an honest conviction, that it rests on Scriptural authority, and is the best modification of the Church of Christ, transmitted through his Apostles: but as for the 'rational majority of the religious public' who can say what it is, or where it is? except this Quarterly Reviewer, who probably thinks he sees it in the pages of his own journal. As the Reviewer seems to consider me as an enthusiast, I beg to say in answer to the charge, that I take the same view of religion as the excellent Lady whose life and correspondence I have recorded. I conceive its existence to be only testified to men by the practice it produces: that it is born of the Spirit, fostered by grace, exercised by temptation, evidenced by works, accepted through Christ Jesus, and a justifying faith in the blood of the cross, from which only cometh its character of holiness; that it is what but a small part of the 'rational and immense majority of the religious world' so called, either feel or acknowledge; an expectancy in the eternal world, for which an infinite price has been paid, for those only who see nothing but ruin in themselves, and recovery in their substitute.

he called at Dr. Johnson's three days before his death, but did not see the Doctor; it is but the assertion of an individual, opposed to the statement of the Rev. C. I. Latrobe, who has preserved the testimony of his venerable father respecting the state of Dr. Johnson's mind, as gathered from his frequent interviews with him in the concluding part of his life. From the same authority we learn that this spiritual friend of the Doctor saw him in his last moments, being speechless, but perfectly sensible, when in a few affectionate words he directed him to the only Saviour, and to his dependance on the merits of that Saviour alone; and that by the pressure of his hand, and other signs, he was assured that his address was thankfully received. But the value of Mr. Latrobe's religious instructions, and his opinion of Johnson's frame of mind, rest not (to use the words of the Rev. J. A. Latrobe, the Grandson of Dr. Johnson's friend,) on an hour's conversation on a death-bed, but upon an intimate acquaintance of some years' duration.

The Reviewer condemns the use of the word 'conversion' as applied to Dr. Johnson; but where does he find the word 'conversion' used by any of those against whom he directs his indignation? The place in which we are to look for it, is the Doctor's own prayer, composed by him eight days before his death, wherein he thus expresses himself, 'forgive my late conversion.'

The sum of the whole is this: Dr. Johnson, who was a great man, and in the general sense of the appellation we may venture to call him a good man, had through his life embraced the doctrine of the propitiatory sacrifice as a fundamental article of belief; but to a single and substantive faith in the specific and unparticipated virtue of that sacrifice, and of the remove at which it puts all human merit, he did not arrive till towards his

latter end; when by the grace of God, working by human instrumentality, the heart of this highly-gifted man was made a recipient of that truth which extinguishes all other confidence, save the solitary hope that rests upon the Redeemer's cross. This Reviewer appears not to see that it is one thing to entertain a belief of the fact of the atonement, and another to make that home-application of it which renders it a saving and sanctifying conviction.

In his meagre, secular view of conversion, he seems to consider it as implying only the change from the denial to the admission of a fact—from a disbelief of testimony to a surrender to the force of proof; neither seeing nor feeling that there is a stage by which the mind advances from the belief of the understanding to the belief of the heart, and that a man is truly converted only when he passes out of the cold generalities of a formal creed into those near and clear views wherein every treacherous light of presumptuous expectation is lost in the blaze of gratuitous mercy.

For these reasons, although neither the Editor of these Memoirs, nor those who have supported the interesting fact of the change in Dr. Johnson's mind from speculative to vital Christianity, have used the word 'conversion,'—it must not be given up to censures as superficial as they are supercilious. What other word will express the same sense in the English language? What other single term could have rendered in English the greek 'επιστρεψας' addressed to Peter by his Lord; or have exhibited the conscious change produced in the bosom of him who prayed, as above shown, to have its tardy progress forgiven.

It is hoped that what has been laid before the reader will show him that the Editor of Mrs. More's life and

correspondence is not likely to be frightened from his opinions or avowals by the silly name bestowed upon him by this Reviewer. To be called a sectary and methodist by these quarterly critics is one of the distinctions by which sound principle may be made more ostensible and honourable. The arrow was barbed, but the bow was in the hands of an imbecile assailant. To be plain with this critic, Dr. Johnson, even before the change above alluded to was complete, appears to have thought more wisely and savingly on what belonged to his peace than his surrounding friends, whose ability as comforters the reviewer deems so worthy of his praise. He wanted a faithful ambassador who could bring him the message of reconciliation, while those around him were telling him to look for his reward. While the record of his useful labours was blazoned before him, he was longing for a righteousness which was too pure to mix with the most plausible goodness of a frail and fallen creature. Because his heart had not at a former period been right with his God, he prayed for the pardon of his *late* conversion. It was the efficacy of this conversion that made him see and confess that his silver was no better than dross, and that what gave him the greatest value among men still needed the refiner's fire.

An extract from a letter of William Cowper to the Rev. John Newton will shew that the general impression of a change in the religious views of Dr. Johnson, near the time of his death, is not a fancy of the Editor of Mrs. More's Life, or a notion newly entertained.

To the Rev. John Newton.

My dear Friend,

We rejoice in the account you give us of Dr. Johnson. His conversion will, indeed, be a singular proof of the

omnipotence of grace; and the more singular the more decided. The world will set his age against his wisdom, and comfort itself with the thought that he must be superannuated. Perhaps, therefore, in order to refute the slander, and do honour to the cause to which he becomes a convert, he could not do better than devote his great abilities, and a considerable part of the remainder of his years, to the production of some important work, not immediately connected with the interests of religion. He would thus give proof that a man of profound learning and the best sense, may become a child without being a fool; and that to embrace the Gospel is no evidence either of enthusiasm, infirmity, or insanity. But he who calls him will direct him.

W. C.

In his diary, Dr. Johnson may be presumed to have laid up the most veracious specimens of his secret cogitations at that period of his life when our Quarterly Reviewer would probably say that his mind was settled in the soundest views of the virtue of the atonement, and the solitary ground of the sinner's pardon. Hear what Cowper, in one of his masculine and lucid letters to Newton, says of this diary.

'In our last newspaper, we had an extract from Johnson's diary, or whatever else he called it. It is certain that the Publisher of it is neither much a friend to the cause of religion, nor to the Author's memory; for by the specimen of it which has reached us, it seems to contain only such stuff as has a direct tendency to expose both to ridicule. His prayers for the dead, and his minute account of the rigour with which he observed church fasts; whether he drank tea or coffee; whether with sugar or without; whether one or two dishes of

either, are the most important items to be found in this childish register of the great Johnson;—supreme dictator in the chair of literature, and almost a driveller in his closet;—a melancholy witness to testify how much of the wisdom of this world may consist with almost infantine ignorance of the affairs of a better.'

Again, in a letter to Mr. Unwin, he says, 'I do not wonder you were so little edified by Johnson's Journal. The portion of it given to us in this day's paper contains not one sentiment worth one farthing except the last, in which he resolves to bind himself with no more unbidden obligations. Poor man! one would think that to pray for his dead wife, and to pinch himself with church fasts, had been almost the whole of his religion. I am sorry that he who was so manly an advocate of the cause of virtue in all other places, was so childishly employed, and so superstitiously too, in his closet. Had he studied his Bible more, to which, by his own confession, he was in great part a stranger, he had known better what use to make of his retired hours, and had trifled less. His lucubrations of this sort have rather the appearance of religious dotage, than of any vigorous exertions towards God. It will be well if the publication prove not hurtful by exposing the best cause, already too much despised, to the ridicule of the profane.'

The parts of the Diary which drew from Cowper the above comments shall not be produced; for what profit or pleasure can be derived from the production of specimens which might in any degree deduct from the dignity or authority of a man whose labours have deservedly placed him on a pedestal, towards which posterity should always be directed to look with veneration and gratitude. But is it not true that he lived and died an edifying instance of the progressive work of the "wisdom

which is from above," in undermining that structure of unholy confidence, which is the common effect of the wisdom of the world, and its blandishments,—in bringing down high imaginations,—and in changing the monuments of intellectual pride into the trophies of converting grace ?

I have now done with the mistaking man who has thought it for the good of his Journal or his employer; or perhaps for the general benefit of his craft, to treat with disrespect, expressed in terms which have made it recoil upon himself, the character of Mrs. More, and the Editor of her correspondence. He knows only the name of the latter, who, on his part can assure him, that he has avoided all opportunities of becoming acquainted with the name of his critic. I say not Ποιησον δ' αιθρην, δος δ' οφθαλμοισιν ιδεσθαι; on the contrary, let me never know from whose hand the weapon has been sent. I wish darkness always to interpose itself between myself and any object which probably I could not see without angry feelings. May he find a friend who will convince him that to babble in popular and pert common-place, on a subject never to be approached but with a humble bearing of self-distrust, and modest discretion, will, to say the least of it, disparage the credit of the journal for which he writes, with the sounder portion of the community.

With respect to Dr. Johnson, I will only finally observe, that although we have much entertaining biography concerning him, and very pleasing compilations of his memorable sayings, and general table-talk, yet it is sufficiently notorious how often on these transitory occasions, a great intellect reasons to conquer, rather than to convince, to dazzle rather than to instruct; and how seldom the character of the mind, and its genuine senti-

ments are disclosed in those assemblies where friends and acquaintance meet to be amused. Little has been shown of Dr. Johnson by his biographers but the characteristics of the exterior man, his moods, his dogmas, and his paradoxes. His literary labours, indeed, may be said to bear the impress of his serious mind, and to place him before us in his moral elevation; but the gradual developement of his views of eternity, the deep undercurrent of his meditations on the eternal world—his thoughts on the great question of the sinner's hope of reconciliation—and the progress of his inward experiences of grace and mercy, did probably never reveal themselves to Mr. Boswell, or Dr. Hawkins, or even to Mr. Burke or Sir Joshua Reynolds; while they laid themselves open to some other friends with whom we know he corresponded on these subjects, and who, like Mr. Latrobe, led him to those streams which alone could satisfy the thirst of his soul. This portion of Dr. Johnson's history would be worth all the rest. Whatever can be recovered of it is very valuable. Great is the interest with which a Christian inquirer must trace the steps of the progress, however faint, by which this powerful reasoner was made a disciple of inspired wisdom, and brought in willing captivity to the foot of the cross.

Little remains for me to say, as to the plan and procedure of the present publication. It is hoped that the objections of some well-meaning persons to the production of the letters exhibiting Mrs. More's early intercourse with a gay and brilliant society, in which her mind in some degree surrendered itself to its fascinations, more, however, from gratitude than choice, have been sufficiently answered in the Prefaces to the Second and Third Editions. Enough seems to have been said to satisfy the candid judge, that the Editor has brought Mrs. More

honestly before the public,—a natural woman proceeding through successive stages, sometimes vacillating, but always advancing in the path by which truth conducts its votaries to the mount of sanctification and honour. The public have now before them no painted piece of biography, but the plain disclosure of a life and correspondence, in which not even a scrupulous care has been used in the selection of the letters, such as would have been expedient, had it been the design of the Editor to present a faultless model to the reader. A fair use only has been made of his materials; and whatever diversity of opinion may be entertained concerning the different letters here produced, nothing more has been affected than to arrange them with as much chronological correctness as was attainable where dates were generally wanting, and then to leave them to their own proper effect in indicating the beautiful progress of a humble believer, under divine teaching, from small beginnings, and through various trials, to victory, security, and repose.

Having thus presented this distinguished lady to the public, with neither dress nor disguise to raise her credit, or to cover her defects, I leave her character, moral and spiritual, to the various verdicts of such as assume to be the judges of human desert. She is gone where her sincere renunciation of all desert will be her availing plea, mindful only of what posterity may think of her for the sake of example and edification. Those who hold their religion by a contentious tenure, always refining and disputing upon doctrines,—those who love to dress it in the speculations of ingenuity and fancy,—those who despise others that differ from them, more than they love the thing about which they disagree,—those who delight to confound zeal with enthusiasm,—and those whose

indifference, assuming the title of liberality, surrenders truths the value of which they are incapable of appreciating, will see nothing to admire in the practical, simple, and scriptural views entertained by Hannah More, of the doctrines and duties of Christianity.

The Quarterly Reviewer seems to me to have been quite incapable of comprehending the worth of this lady. He would fain have derogated from it, but the slough of his criticism, he knew, would not stay upon her. He has solaced himself, therefore, by casting his dirt upon her biographer. I conclude, by apologizing to the public for being provoked by this unscholar-like and ungentlemanly article to encumber this edition with a new Preface. I feel I have thereby placed myself in a disadvantageous comparison with one who would never allow herself to be drawn into contention by any attacks upon her character or her writings, lest her mind, devoted to the permanent good of her fellow-beings, might lose a portion of its usefulness in defending its claims. Doubtless, in the Christian characteristic of forgiveness of injuries, Mrs. More was a far greater proficient than the writer of her life, who has this only to say for himself, that if any animosity or vindictive feelings have accompanied him through this preface, he has laid them down with his pen, to sleep for ever in the same tomb with the mouldering criticisms of the Quarterly Review.

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Lately Published,

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

THE PORTRAITURE OF A CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN.

SECOND EDITION. PRICE 6s.

Hatchards, Piccadilly.

MEMOIRS.

PART I.

FROM A. D. 1745 TO A. D. 1779.

MEMOIRS.

CHAPTER I.

THE period for discharging a duty to the public, in presenting to them the life of HANNAH MORE, has arrived. Time, that has long detained her here in sickness and infirmity, has at length dismissed her to her spiritual home in an eternal world. But it is the privilege, if such it may be called, of the distinguished upon earth, to live in a sort of secondary existence with posterity; and to secure to that existence its rights, and diffuse its benefits, is the responsible task of the biographer. That task, with respect to the remarkable female above-named, is assumed by one to whom a long friendship has afforded opportunities of observing and appreciating her qualities,—whose connexion with those who were her constant companions for many years, has brought him beyond others acquainted with her familiar history; and into whose hands all that was collected concerning her by her nearest friend and

earliest correspondent, her highly-qualified sister, during the most active years of her life, has been deposited for publication.

It is a matter of no light moment, to bring the memory of Hannah More fairly before the world. Her history and her character, in great part, belong to and represent an age, the form and pressure of which has of late been rapidly disappearing, to give place to a new order of things, and a very different system of manners; whether better or worse may be variously affirmed; in some points probably better, in others not so good; but certainly very differently constituted, and disclosing very different tendencies.

In the twilight of the old, and in the dawn of the new era, Mrs. More accomplished her date here,—succeeded, it may be, by ladies more talking and talked about, but probably by none so capable of making the voice of instruction echo from the cottage to the saloon,—from the house of clay to the hall of cedar. To embody the likeness, and perpetuate the remembrance of such a person, is to preserve the best specimen of the past to be contrasted with the present generation, and in some sort to repress the rising fancies, fopperies, and excesses, which usually accompany the developement of new opinions, propelling the mind in a career of self-adulation, to a dangerous distance from old paths, and the lights of experience. There was a happy balance in the qualities of this gifted lady, which kept her from all extremes. With a due estimate of the value of modern advancement, she retained the

savour of our island character, as it was once distinguished by its probity and plainness among the communities of Christendom. What woman was, and what woman is, in her best estate, in the past and present periods of her domestic history, were displayed in her deportment; and what woman should be under all estates, was illustrated in those principles which raised her character above the reach of shifting opinions, and made it a pattern for all times, and all countries.

It seemed but justice to this excellent person to say something respecting her peculiar title to the veneration of her country, before we entered upon the narrative of her instructive and interesting life; reserving the more particular delineation of her character for the opportunity which will more seasonably present itself at the close of our record. The same justice also demands that the reader should be forewarned not to expect a hypothetical model of perfect excellence. No picture, or exemplar, is affected to be drawn; nothing but the sincere life of a daughter of Eve, beginning her course amidst the vanities of the world, and advancing in excellence, under the impulse of extraordinary faculties, but more especially under the guidance of that grace, without which all labour is strife, and all prudence folly.

Her life and social intercourse will be developed in the correspondence about to be presented; in which it will be seen how violent was the assault made upon her principles by flatteries and distinctions; and how successfully the convictions which religion

brings to the conscience, struggled with the world, and brought her safe out of the conflict into that humble path of moderation, circumspection, and trust, which made her example so profitable, and her teaching so efficacious.

A fitter example could not easily be proposed to her countrywomen than that of this virtuous lady, at a time when a new distribution and assortment of duties and occupations are threatening to disturb the balance of society, by confounding distinctions established by nature and necessity. It is, besides, of no small importance to divert the public mind from that infectious biography, which has engrossed of late so much of its attention, blazoning under colours the most false and alluring, the ministers and minstrels of sin and pollution. A woman is here presented to the recollection of her country, who once sat under her own palm-tree, and sent forth her oracular truths, to which neither the murmurs of poverty, nor the sound of the harp or viol, amidst want or waste, in hamlets or in courts, could deny audience or admittance.

HANNAH MORE, the youngest but one of the five daughters of Jacob More, who was descended from a respectable family at Harleston in Norfolk, was born in the year 1745, in the parish of Stapleton, in the county of Gloucester. Mr. Jacob More had received a learned education under the brother of the celebrated Dr. Samuel Clarke, at the Grammar School of Norwich, where he appears to have made a great proficiency in classical learning. He

had been designed for the church; but his early expectations being defeated by the failure of a law-suit in the family, he quitted that part of the country, and obtained, through the patronage of Lord Bottetourt, the mastership of a foundation-school near Stapleton—a situation which, at that time, fulfilled the utmost of his wishes. Soon after he came into this part of the world, he married a young woman of plain education, the daughter of a creditable farmer, but endowed, like himself, with a vigorous intellect: and to the soundness of her judgment in the culture and regulation of her children, the credit and success which attended them has, in great part, been deservedly attributed.

This branch of the family was attached to the established church, Mr. More himself being a staunch Tory, and what is understood by the designation of a high churchman; but the other members of the family were Presbyterians, and the daughters of Mr. Jacob More had frequently heard their father say that he had two great uncles captains in Oliver Cromwell's army. Mr. Jacob More's mother appears, from family tradition, to have possessed a mind of more than ordinary vigour. She was a pious woman, and used to tell her younger relatives, that they would have known how to value gospel privileges, had they lived, like her, in the days of proscription and persecution; when, at midnight, pious worshippers went with stealthy steps through the snow, to hear the words of inspiration delivered by a holy man at her father's house, while her father, with a drawn sword, guarded the entrance

from violent or profane intrusion: adding, that they boarded the minister, and kept his horse, for ten pounds per annum. By an anecdote related of this lady, it should seem that she possessed considerable fortitude. Being subject to sudden seizures, for which bleeding was necessary, to avoid the necessity of sending three miles across the country for medical assistance, she learnt to perform the operation upon herself. The mother's only sister, after whom Mrs. Hannah More was named, was a woman of considerable capacity, greatly improved; and her memory was so esteemed, that an embroidered silk apron of her workmanship, is still preserved as a relic by a distant branch of the family. The following communication, received by the executrix some little time after Mrs. More's death, from one of her relations, furnishes a few interesting particulars of the family:—

Diss, Oct. 14, 1833.

DEAR MADAM,

I am anxious to give you all the information I can respecting my mother's family. I can assure you it is correct, and will correspond with any family letters or documents that may be found; as my revered parent had an excellent memory, and a strong affection for her grandmother, which made us value the only memorial we had, namely, the apron which she worked at a boarding-school in Norwich.

The family of the Mores was highly respectable, but they were of different parties. Mrs. H. More's

grandfather married into a family who were zealous nonconformists. They boarded a minister in their house, and assembled there at the hour of midnight, to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, while Mr. More guarded the entrance with his sword. In after times, my mother has heard the old lady reproach her grand-daughter as lightly esteeming the word of God, when they complained of fatigue after walking some distance in the midst of winter to their place of worship. She was a staunch Presbyterian, remarkable for the simplicity and integrity of her principles. She always rose at four, even in the winter, after she had reached her eightieth year; and she lived beyond her ninetieth. Her son, Mrs. H. More's father, and her daughter, afterwards Mrs. Hayle of Needham, each received an education adapted to their prospects, which were considered as promising all that is desirable in this life; but the unfortunate issue of a law-suit blasted their well-founded hopes, and sent Mr. More from his native county to the west of England. We, who are spared to see the result of this trying dispensation of Providence, must pause to meditate awhile on his infinite wisdom and mercy, more particularly when we look at the descendant of the more fortunate cousin, who enjoyed his unjustly-gotten wealth but a short time. Death entered his dwelling, and his eldest son soon dissipated all the property, as he lived in the lowest state of profligacy. The estates were worth more than eight thousand per annum at the close of the law-suit. There was also a substantial family mansion, with a

library, family portraits, &c. It is situated near the coast of Wenhaston, in Suffolk, not far distant from Aldborough. I once went a journey thither, to examine if there were any monuments that would supply us with data. I found only one; it was erected to the memory of the fortunate Mr. More; not being acquainted with the Christian names, I am at a loss how to distinguish them. There were two Mr. Mores—Mrs. H. More's great uncles,—who served in Cromwell's army. I have seen the name in Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion. There were also a Mrs. and Miss More, who died at Yoxford: the latter of a cancer, at the age of fifty. They, with the rest of the family, were on terms of intimacy with Sir John Blois, Lord Rous, the grandfather of the Earl of Stradbroke, the Goldings of Thorington, Reginald Rabbet, Esq. of Bramfield, Dr. Carter of Beccles, and all the families of consideration in the vicinity. Believe me to be,

Your faithful
humble servant,
ELIZABETH NEWSON.

These little circumstances are of no other value than as they serve to shew the error of the general opinion respecting the quality and condition of this family, whose origin, if not noble, appears at least to have been liberal and respectable.

From information that cannot be questioned, we learn, that at a very early age Hannah More was distinguished by great quickness of apprehension, retentiveness of memory, and a thirst after knowledge;

and as it may be interesting to the curiosity of the reader to trace the dawnings of so bright a genius, I shall not apologize for inserting a few little anecdotes of her early childhood. Between the age of three and four, her mother, thinking it time to teach her to read, found to her astonishment, that by an eager attention to the instructions bestowed upon her sisters, she had already made considerable progress; and before she had attained her fourth year, she repeated her catechism in the church, in a manner which excited the admiration of the minister of the parish, who had so recently received her at the font. Her nurse, a pious old woman, had lived in the family of Dryden, whose son she had attended in his last illness, and the inquisitive mind of the little Hannah was continually prompting her to ask for stories about the great poet. At this early period, too, the signs of that precarious health which exercised her piety and virtue by so many trials in the course of her long life, began to appear; and it was recorded in the family, that pain and suffering were in her case always without their usual attendants of fretfulness and impatience.

At eight years old, her thirst for learning became very conspicuous: but her father, in addition to his other disappointments, having at his removal from his native place, lost the principal part of his books, which he had sent by a separate conveyance, his collection became circumscribed to the very small number which travelled with him, and which consisted of a few Latin, Greek, mathematical,

and geographical authors: but this deficiency was in some measure supplied by his very wonderful memory, which enabled him to satisfy the eager desire of his daughter to learn the histories of the Greeks and Romans, by relating to her, while sitting on his knee, all the striking events which they contained, and reciting to her the speeches of his favourite heroes, first, in their original language, to gratify her ear with the sound, and afterwards translating them into English; particularly dwelling on the parallels and wise sayings of Plutarch; and these recollections made her often afterwards remark, that the conversation of an enlightened parent, or preceptor, constituted one of the best parts of education.

It is related, that Mr. More, who was remarked for his strong dislike of female pedantry, having nevertheless begun to instruct his daughter in the rudiments of the Latin language, and mathematics, was soon frightened at his own success.

The study of the mathematics was not pursued: but she ever carefully cultivated her acquaintance with the Latin classics; and of the mathematics she has often said, that the little taste of them she had thus acquired, was of sensible advantage to her through the whole course of her intellectual progress. The mother, who had received but a moderate education, but is said to have been furnished by nature with some of her best gifts, was as anxious for the instruction of their promising daughter, as the father was fearful of its consequences: and his consent to her entering upon any

new studies was only wrung from him by their joint importunity.

The eldest of the five daughters was sent to a French school at Bristol; as it was the wish of the parents that their children should be qualified to procure for themselves a respectable independence by the establishment of a boarding-school; and this meritorious purpose was seconded by the industry and solid abilities of this daughter, who upon her return from school at the end of each week, constantly imparted to her sisters the lessons she had received, and under this tuition Hannah began an acquaintance with the French language, which was afterwards matured by study and opportunity into a perfect acquaintance with its idiom and pronunciation. Some French officers, of cultivated minds and polished manners, who being on their parole in the neighbourhood, were frequent guests at Mr. More's table, always fixed upon Hannah as their interpreter; and her intercourse with this society is said to have laid the ground of that free and elegant use of the language for which she was afterwards distinguished.

In her days of infancy, when she could possess herself of a scrap of paper, her delight was to scribble upon it some essay or poem, with some well-directed moral, which was afterwards secreted in a dark corner where the servant kept her brushes and dusters. Her little sister, with whom she slept, was usually the repository of her nightly effusions; who in her zeal lest these compositions should be lost, would sometimes steal down to pro-

cure a light, and commit them to the first scrap of paper which she could find. Among the characteristic sports of Hannah's childhood, which their mother was fond of recording, we are told, that she was wont to make a carriage of a chair, and then to call her sisters to ride with her to London to see bishops and booksellers; an intercourse which we shall hereafter show to have been realized. The greatest wish her imagination could frame, when her scraps of paper were exhausted, was that she might one day be rich enough to have a whole quire to herself. And when, by her mother's indulgence, the prize was obtained, it was soon filled with supposititious letters to depraved characters to reclaim them from their errors, and letters in return expressive of contrition and resolutions of amendment.

At length, the sisters were thought sufficiently qualified for their long-projected undertaking of opening a boarding-school at Bristol; which, from its first commencement, was attended with uncommon success; and the eldest Miss More, not yet quite twenty-one, took under her care, Hannah, scarcely then twelve years old, to give her the benefit of masters in the modern languages. And here it may not be amiss to mention, that the high character for pure morals, discreet conduct, and solid information, which the eldest sister had already acquired, made her an early object of that respect which followed her to the tranquil and Christian close of her useful life. She was indebted for this best inheritance to her worthy parents, who had

ever anxiously endeavoured to cultivate in their children's minds a high standard of practical morality, built upon religious principles; and the sisters never ceased to remember the pious care which their father had taken to impress upon their minds the sanctity of the Lord's day.

Among the books that were now brought within her reach, the Spectator was the first to engross her attention; which, if not of solidity enough to furnish to the young mind the sound elements of just thinking and pure taste, was at least calculated to inspire a relish for improving studies, and the reciprocal duties of social intercourse.

She had reached her sixteenth year, when the elder Sheridan came to Bristol, to give lectures on eloquence: and such was the impression made upon her young imagination, by an exhibition so novel and intellectual, that her feelings could find utterance only in a copy of verses, which was presented to the lecturer by a friend of both the parties. The performance was probably beyond the promise of an age so tender, as it induced Mr. Sheridan to seek an acquaintance with the author, which, when obtained, increased his admiration of her dawning genius. About the same period, a dangerous illness brought her under the care of Dr. Woodward, a physician of eminence at that day, and distinguished by his correct taste. On one of his visits, being led into conversation with his patient, on subjects of literature, he forgot the purpose of his visit in the fascination of her talk; till suddenly recollecting himself, when he was half-way down stairs, he

cried out, 'Bless me! I forgot to ask the girl how she was;' and returned to the room, exclaiming, 'How are you to-day, my poor child?'

About this time she formed an acquaintance with Ferguson, the popular astronomer, then engaged at Bristol in giving public lectures: an acquaintance which soon ripened into friendship: and the time they passed together being devoted to topics connected with science, she derived from it a decided advantage; and he, on his part, was impressed with so much respect for her taste and genius, that he is said to have submitted the style of most of his compositions to her inspection. With such testimonies she was early ushered into literary life; and her increasing acquaintance with books and men, kept her on an equality with the expectation which such testimonies had begun to excite. But, among her early acquaintance, to none does she appear to have been more indebted for her advancement in critical knowledge, and the principles of correct taste, than to a linen-draper of Bristol, of the name of Peach, of whose extraordinary sagacity and cultivated intellect, she was often heard to express herself with great admiration. He had been the friend of Hume, who had shown his confidence in his judgment, by entrusting to him the correction of his history, in which, he used to say, he had discovered more than two hundred Scotticisms.

At this time there existed few or none of those judicious selections from our best authors which are now in the hands of all young persons under educa-

tion; and it was observed by the youthful moralist, that for want of such an advantage a custom was prevailing among her juvenile acquaintance, of committing to memory parts of plays, not always sound in principle or pure in tendency. In the hope of giving to these habits a safer direction, she wrote, in her seventeenth year (1762), the pastoral drama of the 'Search after Happiness.' And the attempt succeeded as it deserved.

She appears at this period of her life, as at all others, to have suffered much from a morbid sensibility of constitution, which exposed her to severe suspensions of her mental activity. During one of those intervals of necessary repose, she formed an acquaintance at Weston-super-Mare, to which place she had resorted for the recovery of her health, with Dr. Langhorne; with whom a very lively intellectual intercourse was maintained, and some of whose letters to Miss More are entertaining, and exhibit a good specimen of his vigorous and vivacious pen. Whether, as has been recorded of him, a habit of intemperance, brought on by the pressure of domestic calamity, interrupted this intercourse, and intercepted the career of this highly-qualified man, I know not; but he died in the flower of his prime, when the promises of his youth were on the verge of their full accomplishment. That such a man should have taken pains to put out the lamp that lights up the chambers of speculation and thought within him, would be matter of great regret to all who feel a concern for the memory of departed genius, and to such it will be a gratification

to be informed that the descendants of Dr. Langhorne have vindicated him from the charge of intemperance by testimonies of which it is impossible to deny the validity.

It is mentioned of these kindred geniuses, that, meeting one day on the beach at Weston-super-Mare, Langhorne wrote with the end of his stick, on the sand, as follows:

Along this shore
Walked Hannah More,
Waves, let this record last;
Sooner shall ye,
Proud earth and sea,
Than what she writes, be past.

Under which lines Hannah immediately wrote with the handle of her whip:

Some firmer basis, polished Langhorne, chuse
On which to write the dictates of thy Muse;
Her strains in solid characters rehearse,
And be thy tablets lasting as thy verse.

Blagdon House, Oct. 22, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,

My evil genius told me you were no more. I sat one fine day at Lincombe-spring, and thought of you with great sensibility. Poor Hannah More, said I, bade me plant weeping-willows along the side of the rivulet. She shall be obeyed; and they shall shed natural tears over departed genius,—over buried friendship.

Genius, and wit, and beauty wait,
The mansions of the silent urn;
One tender tear shall soothe her fate,
One tender line for Hannah mourn,

Our best thanks for your Indian sweet-meats. But alas! we have nothing to return except the *frutti campestri.*

Believe me, dear Madam, I look forward to the Christmas vacation with abundance of pleasure. Then, I tell my hopes, we shall once more live melodious days.

Bustle is delighted with his nut-crackers, and says, he now loves Hannah More a great deal, and Miss Neale only a little. A genuine Roger of the Vale!

Mrs. L. desires me to say every thing that is friendly and affectionate for her. Pray tell the sisterhood that I am their most faithful humble servant; and then tell yourself *tutti che senti Amicizia di core,* for I am most truly,

Most sincerely yours,

J. LANGHORNE.

Blagdon House, 12th Feb. 1775.

MY DEAR MADAM,

People who have a knack at writing have many advantages over those poor folks who know little about the matter; and this I had the sagacity to discover before I had got quite to the end of your letter. When I found that you had slipped away to London, without any more regard to your promise than a prime minister, I opened your letter in no good temper, you may suppose. But I had not read far before I began to soften, by and by to be appeased, then satisfied, and afterwards in perfect good humour; and all this for no reason in the

world, that I could discover, but because some folks have a knack in writing, and like Milton's very polite and sensible devil, can make 'the worse appear the better reason.'

The *lacheté* of being thus overcome, however, is perfectly ridiculous; and, now that I have recovered my senses a little, I can see your fault in spite of your address; or, to speak like my old acquaintance, Dr. I—, 'I can perceive the turpitude of your guilt through the magnetism of your eloquence.'

In plain English, you were very lazy and very naughty, in not stepping over to Blagdon, as you promised. You know my carriage was at your summons. But you did not care a farthing for us, and you are disappointed if you thereby think to make us unhappy; for there is no reason why we should despise ourselves, though you despise us.

I never had a doubt concerning the spuriousness of the Poems of Ossian. It was impossible the originals should exist. What chiefly gives them an antique air is their penury of ideas; a circumstance that does more honour to the inventor's judgment than to his imagination. After all, I have a regard for Macpherson, who has certainly some talents, and is a well-behaved man.

Should you be in town when the poor 'Justice' is delivered from the burden of the press, you will perhaps let me know how the air agrees with him. Whatever that town may say, of this be assured that he deserves no favour at its hands.

You are a classic—*Vive, memor mei!*

J. LANGHORNE.

Blagdon House, June 24th, 1775.

That your *fame* had reached the ends of the earth every body knew; but that *you* were gone thither, was such news to me that I shall not forget it—till I see you here again. What you tell me, over and above, is still more extraordinary—that you eat and drink beneath the sky! and that the sun, at this time of the year, is somewhat of the warmest. Why, I'd lay my whole Greek estate to one of Mr. Newberry's little books, that fifty millions of people, not one of whom was called Hannah More, have done and discovered the same. There's for you now; and for your attempting, with your allegories and your metaphors, and such jack-o'-lantern things, to puzzle a poor country-parson, and a fellow that hath no wit.

By the bye, though I envy Bristol the quiet possession of you most mortally, I do not like to hear of you in this same Cornwall, crawling about the ancles and heels of the island, insomuch that if she does but shake a leg, down you go into the sea without recovery.

Yet did I think, for at least two hours, of leaving my *Arx secura,* and visiting your bower; nay, I was full three quarters more resolved, and were I now to ask myself what prevented me, I should get no answer. I designed to have passed through Exeter, Tavistock, Lostwithiel, Truro, and Penryn —was I right? However, I beg my most respectful compliments to the family where you are, and let them know that, if I come into those parts, I shall

ask permission to read the inscription on the bower. It is elegantly plain, such as all things of that kind ought to be. I would, by my good-will, have my muse like my mistress ;-

> Her voice the music of her heart,
> Unforced, and innocent of art;
> Her face a flower of vernal morn,
> That opens, and a smile is born,

I would willingly have it so, I say; but we all run after out-of-the-way things. How enchantingly beautiful was Gray's Muse, when she wandered through the church-yard in her morning dress. But when she was arrayed in gorgeous attire, in a monstrous hoop and a brocade petticoat, I could gaze upon her indeed; she made an impression on my eye, but not on my heart. Can you tell me who wrote a little poem called *The Halcyon?* I met with it lately in a foolish collection, and was mightily pleased with its elegant simplicity and easy flow. I have read something that Mason has done in finishing a half-written ode of Gray. I find he will never get the better of that glare of colouring, 'that dazzling blaze of song,' (an expression of his own, and ridiculous enough) which disfigures half his writings.—Adieu!

J. LANGHORNE.

Blagdon House, Feb. 11, 1776.

MY DEAR MADAM,

There is as much difference between reputation and fame as there is between time and eternity; and I, as a spiritual person, should attend to the

interests of the latter; I am, therefore, much less concerned about your reputation than your fame. You shall not appear in the St. James's, nor in any other saint's chronicle, nor any where else except in the saint's calendar—whoever does these things, the author is suspected, and *the wife of Cæsar*—you know the rest. I hear you have had the honour to be abused by Kenrick; I think nothing would hurt me so much as such a fellow's praise—I should feel as if I had a blister upon me.

You will stand first in the Review for February I am told; the Storm was in the way in January, and the article arrived too late; *there*, too, I find, you will be trimmed. It is no matter—you deserve all this for running away from your *tried* friends in the country. If you will come down to us, we will remove the emporium of letters from London to Bristol; we'll set up a press, and write books; I have got a *thing* and a *half* ready for it. *Les voici:*

APOSTROPHE TO MERCY.

(FROM THE COUNTRY JUSTICE, PART III.)

O Mercy! throned on His eternal breast,
Who breathed the savage waters into rest!
By each soft pleasure that thy bosom smote,
When first Creation started from His thought;
By each warm tear that melted o'er thine eye,
When on his works were written, 'These must die!'
If secret slaughter yet, nor cruel war
Have from these mortal regions forc'd thee far,
Still, to our follies, to our frailties blind,
Oh! stretch thy healing wings o'er human kind!

J. L.

At the age of twenty, having access to the best libraries in her neighbourhood, she cultivated with assiduity the Italian, Latin, and Spanish languages, exercising her genius and polishing her style in translations and imitations, especially of the odes of Horace, and of some of the dramatic compositions of Metastasio, which were shown only to her more intimate literary friends, of whom some have left their testimonies to their spirit and elegance. She was not, however, in sufficient good humour with these, or indeed, with any of her very early compositions, to allow them to live. The only one which was rescued, was Metastasio's opera of Regulus, which after it had lain by for some years, she was induced to work up into a drama, and publish under the title of 'The Inflexible Captive.'

It is related of her, in proof of the ease with which she transfused the spirit of the Italian authors into her own language, that being present at a celebrated Italian concert, to gratify one of the company, who was desirous of knowing the subject of the performance, she took out her pencil, and gave a translation, which was snatched from her, and inserted in the principal Magazine of the day.

She ranked among her literary friends at this time, Dean Tucker, Dr. Ford, and Dr. Stonehouse, persons, to mix with whom, upon equal terms, was proof sufficient of her early maturity of understanding.

Dr. (afterwards Sir James) Stonehouse, was then a name of high reputation. He had been many years a physician in great practice at North-

ampton, which profession he was induced to relinquish for one to which the bent of his mind had strongly disposed and prepared him. Having recovered his health by the use of the Bristol waters, he took holy orders, and fixed his residence in Bristol, in the same street in which Hannah More then lived with her sisters. A friendship soon commenced between them, which suffered no interruption till the death of Sir James. Miss H. More had written but little when this acquaintance commenced, but Dr. Stonehouse discerned the promise of greater things, and was unbounded in his admiration of the freshness and originality of her powers in conversation, in which her modesty and judgment contended with her fancy and fertility. Miss H. More wrote the epitaphs of both Sir James Stonehouse and his lady, which were placed in the chapel at the Hot-wells.

It would be injurious to the merits of Dr. Stonehouse, to forget to say of him that he was an useful guide to his young friend in her study of divinity, and her choice of theological writers.

At about the age of twenty-two, she received the addresses of a gentleman of fortune, more than twenty years older than herself. He was a man of strict honour and integrity, had received a liberal education, and, among other recommendations of an intellectual character, had cultivated a taste for poetry, and shown much skill in the embellishments of rural scenery, and the general improvement of his estate. But for the estate of matrimony he appears to have wanted that essential

qualification, a cheerful and composed temper. The prospect of marriage, with the appendage of an indifferent temper, was gloomy enough, but there were other decisive objections, on which it is unimportant to dwell. It will be enough to produce an extract from a letter received by the executrix of Hannah More soon after her decease, written by a lady whose early and long intimacy with her, and personal knowledge of this delicate transaction, coupled with the great respectability of her character, entitle her testimony to the fullest credit.[1]

Keynsham, near Bristol, Feb. 10, 1834.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I knew the late Mrs. Hannah More for nearly sixty-four years, I may say most intimately; for during my ten years' residence with her sisters, I was received and treated, not as a scholar, but as a child of their own, in a confidential and affectionate manner; and ever since the first commencement of our acquaintance the same friendly intercourse was kept up by letters and visiting. I was living at her sister's when Mr. Turner paid his addresses to her; for it was owing to my cousin Turner (whom my father had placed at their school) that she became acquainted with Mr. Turner. He always had his cousins, the two Miss Turners, to spend their holidays with him, as a most respectable worthy lady managed and kept his house. His residence at Belmont was beautifully situated,

1 The widow of the late Captain Simmons.

and he had carriages and horses, and everything to make a visit to Belmont agreeable. He permitted his cousins to ask any young persons at the school to spend their vacations with them. Their governesses being nearly of their own age, they made choice of the two youngest of the sisters,—Hannah and Patty More. The consequence was natural. She was very clever and fascinating, and he was generous and sensible; he became attached, and made an offer of marriage, which was accepted. He was a man of large fortune, and she was young and dependent. She quitted her interest in the concern of the school, and was at great expense in preparing and fitting herself out to be the wife of a man of that condition. The day was fixed more than once for the marriage; and Mr. Turner each time postponed it. Her sisters and friends interfered, and would not permit her to be so treated, and trifled with. He continued in the wish to marry her: but her friends, after his former conduct, and on other accounts, persevered in keeping up her determination not to renew the engagement.

I am, dear Madam, &c.

In this difficulty (we borrow still from the same authentic source), Sir James Stonehouse was applied to for his timely interposition, and his assistance was promptly afforded. In the counsel of such a friend she found resolution to terminate this anxious and painful treaty. The final separation was amicably agreed upon, and the contracting parties broke off their intercourse by mutual consent. At their

last conversation together, Mr. T. proposed to settle an annuity upon her, a proposal which was with dignity and firmness rejected, and the intercourse appeared to be absolutely at an end. Let it be recorded, however, in justice to the memory of this gentleman, that his mind was ill at ease till an interview was obtained with Dr. Stonehouse, to whom he declared his intention to secure to Miss More, with whom he had considered his union as certain, an annual sum which might enable her to devote herself to her literary pursuits, and compensate, in some degree, for the robbery he had committed upon her time. Dr. Stonehouse consulted with the friends of the parties, and the consultation terminated in a common opinion that, all things considered, a part of the sum proposed might be accepted without the sacrifice of delicacy or propriety, and the settlement was made without the knowledge of the lady, Dr. Stonehouse consenting to become the agent and trustee. It was not, however, till some time after the affair had been thus concluded, that the consent of Miss More could be obtained by the importunity of her friends.

The regard and respect of Mr. Turner for Miss More, was continued through his life; her virtues and excellences were his favourite theme among his intimate friends, and at his death he bequeathed her a thousand pounds.

I have entered into this transaction at a time when the grave has heaped its mound upon it, and no bosom any longer beats that can be affected by the narrative. No apprehension therefore of giving

pain has imposed silence upon me; and as I know not whose malevolence may induce them to misinterpret the actions of this excellent person, (and Hannah More has not so sojourned here as not to have provoked "the strife of tongues") I have thought it of importance to rescue this great and generous name from the imputation of inconstancy, or a calculating prudence, in an affair in which truth and honour claim to be the rightful arbiters.

Her correct and tender mind, which did not come out from these embarrassments without a certain degree of distress and disturbance, seemed to seek relief in the resolution which she formed and kept, of avoiding a similar entanglement. Nor did her resolution want its trial and its testimony. Not long afterwards her hand was again solicited and refused; and, as it happened in the former case, the attachment of the proposer was succeeded by a cordial respect, which was met on her part by a corresponding sentiment, and ended only with his existence. These incidents the reader of delicacy will duly appreciate. There is upon the face of them a stamp of that high-mindedness and moral strength, by which the dignity of her character was illustrated in the various walk of her Christian life—public and private.

Those who knew her best, feel the difficulty most of deciding to which belonged the greater homage—the firm or the amiable qualities of her mind. At the early age at which we are now retracing her course, we see in her correspondence and intercourse, a spirit and a principle, which if we do

not admire and love, it is because the fascinations of imposing and unfeminine examples have, in these days of deceptious lights and dangerous novelties, sophisticated common sense, and inverted the natural dispositions of order and propriety.

CHAPTER II.

WE have now attended Miss More to the threshold of active life and general society,—to the portal of that tumultuous mart where the busy clamour of interest, emulation, and vanity assail the ear and bewilder the senses—to that stage in the progress of ardent inexperience in which the blooming speculations of hope and fancy are to be exchanged for vulgar verities.

Hannah More now presents herself to us as a member of those assemblies where wit and fashion were to put her principles upon the defensive, and to prove and decide her character. Her raptures on her first introduction to a 'live author,' she has been heard very humorously to describe; and her sisters long remembered the strong desire she expressed to have a view, from some hiding place, of Dr. Johnson, or some of the literary oracles of the day. Garrick's career was supposed to be drawing to a close, which inflamed her eager desire to hear Shakspeare speaking in the person of that consummate actor—a wish that might be pardoned in

one to whom the Muse had already made a tender of her patronage, and vouchsafed her inspiration; and for whose brows she was preparing an unfading chaplet.

What her opinions were at a subsequent period, of the lawfulness of frequenting theatrical exhibitions, became apparent in her conduct and correspondence; but at the time we are regarding her, neither the manners and habits of persons denominated religious, nor the scruples of her own mind, had interdicted her visits to the theatre.

But there are some rare minds, in which sobriety and enthusiasm settle well together, and combine their forces; and of this temperament was Hannah More's. Impelled by the consciousness of superior powers, she probably felt a natural desire to enter upon the field of intellectual enterprise. Society, in its most engaging form, was extending its arms to receive her, and it was not in woman to resist the invitation; but her correspondence and confidential communications soon made it apparent how just an estimate she put upon its fascinations. She possessed that 'hidden strength,' which in 'the various bustle of resort' kept her from vanity and vacillation. Her admiration of genius belonged to the structure and constitution of her mind, on which the fairest forms of truth and sentiment were beautifully inscribed; and if to know the great and to hear the wise, was the ambition of her early days, let it be remembered that, in the maturity of her age, to gain the good was her single concern: having to decide between pleasure and virtue,

she made her choice with a promptitude so resolute, that, if I must not find in Hercules a likeness for a lady, I may well compare her with the heroine of Comus. She came forth to meet the world with a talisman in her bosom; 'something holy lodging there,' that broke and defeated its spells and its forgeries.

Some of her earliest letters, after her introduction into general society, were written to Mrs. Gwatkin, (but it is to be regretted they are without date), then living near Bristol, one of her first and firmest friends; and it will probably amuse the reader to be made acquainted with their contents.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Here have I been a whole week, to my shame be it spoken, without ever having given you the least intimation of my existence, or change of situation; but I doubt not of your having been informed of it by my friend Charlotte. You, who know the hurry, bustle, dissipation, and nonsensical flutter of a town life, will, I am sure, excuse me if I have not devoted a few minutes to you before, when I assure you it has not been in my power. Martha and the fair Clarissa are of the party, and we are comfortably situated in Henrietta Street.

Monday we dined, drank tea, and supped, at the amiable Sir Joshua Reynolds'; there was a brilliant circle of both sexes; not, in general, literary,

though partly so. We were not suffered to come away till one.

I have not been able to pay my devoirs to my dear Dr. Johnson yet, though Miss Reynolds has offered to accompany me whenever I am at leisure. I wish I could convey his 'Journey to the Hebrides' to you; Cadell tells me he sold 4000 of them the first week. It is an agreeable work, though the subject is sterility itself. He knows how to avail himself of the commonest circumstances, and trifles are no longer trifles when they have passed through his hands. He makes the most entertaining and useful reflections on every occurrence, and when occurrences fail, he has a never-failing fund in his own accomplished and prolific mind. Pray let me hear from you soon. I wish you were with us.

I am so hurried, that I do not know what I write. Adieu, my dear friend,

Your's at all times,
HANNAH MORE.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

That *Idler*, that *Rambler*, Dr. Johnson, was out of town, so we were deprived of the felicity of seeing him last night; but it is a pleasure the obliging Miss Reynolds has promised me. Though this bright sun did not cheer us with his rays, yet we had a constellation of the Agreeables. I enclose the verses I mentioned. The thought happened to strike in preference to the others. We cannot have the pleasure of seeing Charles Street to-night——

Have been to hear Lindsey——Hope you did not expire at the opera, for fear, as Lady Grace says, you should not live to go to another.

Adieu—much your's,

H. More.

This visit to London was made in 1773 or 4, in company with two of her sisters; and her introduction to Mr. and Mrs. Garrick took place in about a week after her arrival. Garrick had seen a letter from Miss More to a person known to them both, so well describing the effect produced upon her mind by his performance of the character of Lear, as to inflame his curiosity to see and converse with her. The interview was easily procured; and after an hour passed together, they parted reciprocally pleased, having discovered in each other what was gratifying to both—natural manners, original powers, and wit in union with good nature. On the day following, Miss More and Mrs. Montagu were brought together at Mr. Garrick's house; and her introduction to the great and the greatly-endowed was sudden and general. It came upon her with a surprise which might excuse some whisperings of self-adulation, and some disturbance of principle.

It was afterwards Mr. Garrick's delight to introduce his new friend to the best and most gifted of his own acquaintance.

The desire she had long felt to see Dr. Johnson, was speedily gratified. Her first introduction to him took place at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who prepared her, as he handed her up stairs, for

the possibility of his being in one of his moods of sadness and silence.

She was surprised at his coming to meet her, as she entered the room, with good humour in his countenance, and a macaw of Sir Joshua's in his hand; and still more, at his accosting her with a verse from a Morning Hymn which she had written at the desire of Sir James Stonehouse. In the same pleasant humour he continued the whole of the evening. Some extracts from the letters of one of her sprightly sisters, to the family at home, will afford the best picture of the intercourse and scenes in which Hannah was now beginning to bear a part.

London, 1774.

Since I wrote last, Hannah has been introduced by Miss Reynolds to Baretti and to Edmund Burke, (the 'sublime and beautiful' Edmund Burke!) From a large party of literary persons, assembled at Sir Joshua's, she received the most encouraging compliments; and the spirit with which she returned them was acknowledged by all present, as Miss Reynolds informed poor us. Miss R. repeats her little poem by heart, with which also the great Johnson is much pleased.[1]

[1] If there be any persons remaining, who were in habits of social intercourse with the family of Mrs. H. More, they will readily bear testimony to the originality of humour and playfulness of imagination which enlivened the conversation and letters of this lady, Miss Sally More, who possessed also talents of another kind; some of the most valuable of the cheap repository tracts being the productions of her pen. She was senior to Mrs. H. M. by a very few years. The reader will, doubtless, peruse with all due indulgence, the joyful effusions of an ardent and intelligent country girl, who found herself suddenly introduced to the choicest society of the metropolis.

London, 1774.

We have paid another visit to Miss Reynolds. She had sent to engage Dr. Percy, (Percy's collection,—now you know him,) who is quite a sprightly modern, instead of a rusty antique, as I. expected. He was no sooner gone, than the most amiable and obliging of women (Miss Reynolds,) ordered the coach to take us to Dr. Johnson's *very own house*; yes, Abyssinia's Johnson! Dictionary Johnson! Rambler's, Idler's, and Irene's Johnson! Can you picture to yourselves the palpitation of our hearts as we approached his mansion. The conversation turned upon a new work of his, (the Tour to the Hebrides), and his old friend Richardson. Mrs. Williams, the blind poet, who lives with him, was introduced to us. She is engaging in her manners; her conversation lively and entertaining. Miss Reynolds told the doctor of all our rapturous exclamations on the road. He shook his scientific head at Hannah, and said, 'She was a *silly thing*.' When our visit was ended, he called for his hat, (as it rained) to attend us down a very long entry to our coach, and not Rasselas could have acquitted himself more *en cavalier*. We are engaged with him at Sir Joshua's, Wednesday evening. What do you think of us?

I forgot to mention, that not finding Johnson in his little parlour, when we came in, Hannah seated herself in his great chair, hoping to catch a little ray of his genius; when he heard it, he laughed heartily, and told her it was a chair in which he

never sat. He said it reminded him of Boswell and himself when they stopt a night at the spot (as they imagined) where the Weird Sisters appeared to Macbeth: the idea so worked upon their enthusiasm, that it quite deprived them of rest: however, they learnt, the next morning, to their mortification, that they had been deceived, and were quite in another part of the country.

Johnson afterwards mentioned to Miss Reynolds how much he had been touched with the enthusiasm which was visible in the whole manner of the young authoress, and which was evidently genuine and unaffected. Such was the first introduction of Hannah More into the world of literature; an introduction which had far exceeded her modest expectations, and more than gratified the thirst she had so early felt for intellectual society. She returned with her sisters to Bristol, after a six-weeks' residence in town, which she again visited in the February of the following year, 1775.

We shall now best make out the details of some years of her life, by extracts from her letters, written chiefly to her sisters in the country, with the carelessness and freedom of one who wrote only for the bosom and the fire-side, and not for the world. Indeed, she never attempted what are called *good* letters herself, or much valued them when written by others. She used to say, 'If I want wisdom, sentiment, or information, I can find them much better in books. What I want in a letter, is the picture of my friend's mind,

and the common course of his life. I want to know what he is saying and doing; I want him to turn out the inside of his heart to me, without disguise, without appearing better than he is; without writing for a character. I have the same feeling in writing to him. My letter is, therefore, worth nothing to an indifferent person, but it is of value to the friend who cares for me.' She added, that letters among near relations were family newspapers, meant to convey paragraphs of intelligence, and advertisements of projects, and not sentimental essays.

Miss H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1775.

Our first visit was to Sir Joshua's, where we were received with all the friendship imaginable. I am going, to-day, to a great dinner. Nothing can be conceived so absurd, extravagant, and fantastical, as the present mode of dressing the head. Simplicity and modesty are things so much exploded, that the very names are no longer remembered. I have just escaped from one of the most fashionable disfigurers; and though I charged him to dress me with the greatest simplicity, and to have only a very distant eye upon the fashion, just enough to avoid the pride of singularity, without running into ridiculous excess; yet in spite of all these sage didactics, I absolutely blush at myself, and turn to the glass with as much caution as a vain beauty, just risen from the small pox; which cannot be a more disfiguring disease than the present mode of

dressing. Of the one, the calamity may be greater in its consequences, but of the other it is more corrupt in its cause. We have been reading a treatise on the morality of Shakspeare; it is a happy and easy way of filling a book that the present race of authors have arrived at—that of criticising the works of some eminent poet; with monstrous extracts and short remarks. It is a species of cookery I begin to grow tired of; they cut up their authors into chops, and by adding a little crumbled bread of their own, and tossing it up a little, they present it as a fresh dish: you are to dine upon the poet; —the critic supplies the garnish; yet has the credit, as well as profit, of the whole entertainment.

From the same to the same.

London, 1775.

I had yesterday the pleasure of dining in Hill Street, Berkeley Square, *at a certain Mrs. Montagu's, a name not totally obscure.* The party consisted of herself, Mrs. Carter, Dr. Johnson, Solander, and Matty, Mrs. Boscawen, Miss Reynolds, and Sir Joshua, (the idol of every company); some other persons of high rank and less wit, and your humble servant,—a party that would not have disgraced the table of Lælius, or of Atticus. I felt myself a worm, the more a worm for the consequence which was given me, by mixing me with such a society; but, as I told Mrs. Boscawen, and with great truth, I had an opportunity of making an experiment of my heart, by which I learnt that

I was not envious, for I certainly did not repine at being the meanest person in company.

Mrs. Montagu received me with the most encouraging kindness; she is not only the finest genius, but the finest lady I ever saw: she lives in the highest style of magnificence; her apartments and table are in the most splendid taste: but what baubles are these when speaking of a Montagu! her form (for she has no *body*) is delicate even to fragility; her countenance the most animated in the world; the sprightly vivacity of fifteen, with the judgment and experience of a Nestor. But I fear she is hastening to decay very fast; her spirits are so active, that they must soon wear out the little frail receptacle that holds them. Mrs. Carter has in her person a great deal of what the gentlemen mean when they say such a one is a 'poetical lady;' however, independently of her great talents and learning, I like her much; she has affability, kindness, and goodness; and I honour her heart even more than her talents: but I do not like one of them better than Mrs. Boscawen; she is at once polite, learned, judicious, and humble; and Mrs. Palk tells me, her letters are thought not inferior to Mrs. Montagu's. She regretted (so did I,) that so many suns could not possibly shine at one time; but we are to have a smaller party, where, from fewer luminaries, there may emanate a clearer, steadier, and more beneficial light. Dr. Johnson asked me how I liked the new tragedy of Braganza. I was afraid to speak before them all, as I knew a diversity of opinion prevailed among the

company: however, as I thought it a less evil to dissent from the opinion of a fellow-creature, than to tell a falsity, I ventured to give my sentiments; and was satisfied with Johnson's answering, 'You are right, madam.'

From Miss Sarah More to one of her sisters.

London, 1775.

Tuesday evening we drank tea at Sir Joshua's with Dr. Johnson. Hannah is certainly a great favourite. She was placed next him, and they had the entire conversation to themselves. They were both in remarkably high spirits: it was certainly her lucky night! I never heard her say so many good things. The old genius was extremely jocular, and the young one very pleasant. You would have imagined we had been at some comedy had you heard our peals of laughter. They, indeed, tried which could 'pepper the highest,' and it is not clear to me that the lexicographer was really the highest seasoner. Yesterday Mr. Garrick called upon us; a volume of Pope lay upon the table; we asked him to read, and he went through the latter part of the 'Essay on Man.' He was exceedingly good-humoured, and expressed himself quite delighted with our eager desire for information; and when he had satisfied one interrogatory, said, 'Now, madam, what next!' He read several lines we had been disputing about with regard to emphasis, in many different ways, before he decided which was right. He sat with us from half-past twelve

till three, reading and criticising. We have just had a call from Mr. Burke.

We will now present an extract from another of Hannah's letters to one of her sisters.

London, 1775.

'Bear me, some God, O quickly bear me hence,
To wholesome solitude, the nurse of ——'

'Sense,' I was going to add in the words of Pope, till I recollected that *pence* had a more appropriate meaning, and was as good a rhyme. This apostrophe broke from me on coming from the opera, the first I ever *did*, the last I trust I ever *shall* go to. For what purpose has the Lord of the universe made his creature man with a comprehensive mind? Why make him a little lower than the angels? Why give him the faculty of thinking, the powers of wit and memory; and to crown all, an immortal and never-dying spirit? Why all this wondrous waste, this prodigality of bounty, if the mere animal senses of sight and hearing (by which he is not distinguished from the brutes that perish) would have answered the end as well; and yet I find the same people are seen at the opera every night—an amusement written in a language the greater part of them do not understand, and performed by such a set of beings!

But the man

'Who bade the reign commence
Of rescued nature and reviving sense.'

sat at my elbow, and reconciled me to my situation,

not by his approbation, but his presence. Going to the opera, like getting drunk, is a sin that carries its own punishment with it, and that a very severe one. Thank my dear Dr. S—— for his kind and seasonable admonitions on my last Sunday's engagement at Mrs. Montagu's. Conscience had done its office before; nay, was busy at the time: and if it did not dash the cup of pleasure to the ground, infused at least a tincture of wormwood into it. I *did* think of the alarming call, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" and I thought of it to-night at the opera.

From the same to the same.

Sunday night, 9 *o'clock.*

Perhaps you will say I ought to have thought of it again to-day, when I tell you I have dined abroad; but it is a day I reflect on without those uneasy sensations one has when one is conscious it has been spent in trifling company. I have been at Mrs. Boscawen's. Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Chapone, and myself only were admitted. We spent the time, not as wits, but as reasonable creatures; better characters, I trow. The conversation was sprightly but serious. I have not enjoyed an afternoon so much since I have been in town. There was much sterling sense, and they are all ladies of high character for piety; of which, however, I do not think their visiting on Sundays any proof: for though their conversation is edifying, the example is bad. You do not, I presume, expect I

should send you a transcript of the conversation: I have told you the interlocutors, but you are not to expect the dialogue. Patty says if she had such rich subjects, she could make a better hand of them: I believe her: my outlines are perhaps more just, but she beats me all to nothing in the colouring. She is but a young painter, and is fond of drapery and ornament: for my own part the more I see of the 'honoured, famed and great,' the more I see of the littleness, the unsatisfactoriness of all created good; and that no earthly pleasure can fill up the wants of the immortal principle within. One need go no farther than the company I have just left, to be convinced that 'pain is for man,' and that fortune, talents, and science are no exemption from the universal lot. Mrs. Montagu, eminently distinguished for wit and virtue, 'the wisest where all are wise,' is hastening to insensible decay by a slow, but sure hectic. Mrs. Chapone has experienced the severest reverses of fortune; and Mrs. Boscawen's life has been a continued series of afflictions, which may almost bear a parallel with those of the righteous man of Uz. Tell me, then, what is it to be wise? This you will say is exhibiting the unfavourable side of the picture of humanity, but it is the right side, the side that shows the likeness.

London, 1775.

I have read Sir Joshua's last discourse at the academy: in my poor judgment it is a masterpiece for matter as well as style, and that we have scarcely a finer writer. I have told the Reynoldses how angry

I am with Burke for an unhandsome paragraph on the Dean of Gloucester (Dr. Tucker). They are warm friends, but I would not give up my point. They seem to think that the man and the politician are different things: but I do not see why a person should not be bound to speak truth in the House of Commons as much as in his own house.[1]

At the end of another six weeks, Hannah More again returned to her family, and paid her next visit to London in the January of 1776.

During her residence at home she one day laughingly said to her sisters, 'I have been so fed with praise and flattering attentions, that I think I will venture to try what is my real value, by writing a slight poem, and offering it to Cadell myself.' In a fortnight after this idea was started, she had completed the legendary tale of 'Sir-Eldred of the Bower;' to which she added the little poem of the 'Bleeding Rock,' which she had written some years previously. Upon her presenting it to Mr. Cadell, he offered her a price which exceeded her idea of its worth; very handsomely adding, that if she could hereafter discover what Goldsmith obtained for 'the Deserted Village,' he would make up the sum, be it what it might. This treaty was the beginning of a connexion with Mr. Cadell, which was carried on through an intercourse of nearly

[1] Mrs. H. More has frequently mentioned, as a curious coincidence, that Edmund Burke, Dean Tucker, and Mrs. Macauley called upon her in Park Street, Bristol, on the same morning, fortunately in succession, as they were all at that time writing against each other.

forty years, with a reciprocity of esteem and regard that suffered no interruption.[1]

Miss H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1776.

Just returned from spending one of the most agreeable days of my life, with the female Mæcenas of Hill Street: she engaged me five or six days ago to dine with her, and had assembled half the wits of the age. The only fault that charming woman has, is, that she is fond of collecting too many of them together at one time. There were nineteen persons assembled at dinner, but after the repast, she has a method of dividing her guests, or rather letting them assort themselves into little groups of five or six each. I spent my time in going from one to the other of these little societies, as I happened more or less to like the subjects they were discussing. Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Montagu's sister, a very good writer, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Barbauld, and a man of letters, whose name I have forgotten, made up one of these little parties. When we had canvassed two or three subjects, I stole off and joined in with the next group, which was composed of Mrs. Montagu, Dr. Johnson, the Provost of Dublin, and two other ingenious men. In this party there was a diversity of opinions,

[1] It may be worth mentioning, as rather a curious coincidence, that Cadell was a native of the same village as herself, though they were entirely strangers to each other till this negociation introduced them to an acquaintance.

which produced a great deal of good argument and reasoning. There were several other groups less interesting to me, as they were composed more of rank than talent, and it was amusing to see how the people of sentiment singled out each other, and how the fine ladies and pretty gentlemen naturally slid into each other's society.

I had the happiness to carry Dr. Johnson home from Hill Street, though Mrs. Montagu publicly declared she did not think it prudent to trust us together, with such a declared affection on both sides. She said she was afraid of a Scotch elopement. He has invited himself to drink tea with us to-morrow, that we may read Sir Eldred together. I shall not tell you what he said of it, but to me the best part of his flattery was, that he repeats all the best stanzas by heart, with the energy, though not with the grace of a Garrick.

London, 1776.

Let the Muses shed tears, for Garrick has this day sold the patent of Drury Lane Theatre, and will act no more after this winter. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* He retires with all his blushing honours thick about him; his laurels as green as in their early spring. Who shall supply his loss to the stage? Who shall now hold the master-key of the human heart? Who direct the passions with more than magic power? Who purify the stage; and who, in short, shall direct and nurse my dramatic muse?

Yesterday was another of the few sunshiny days

with which human life is so scantily furnished. We spent it at Garrick's: he was in high good humour, and inexpressibly agreeable. Here was likely to have been another jostling and intersecting of our pleasures; but as they knew Johnson would be with us at seven, Mrs. Garrick was so good as to dine a little after three, and all things fell out in comfortable succession. We were at the reading of a new tragedy, and insolently and unfeelingly pronounced against it. We got home in time: I hardly ever spent an evening more pleasantly or profitably. Johnson, full of wisdom and piety, was very communicative. To enjoy Dr. Johnson perfectly, one must have him to oneself, as he seldom cares to speak in mixed parties. Our tea was not over till nine; we then fell upon Sir Eldred: he read both poems through; suggested some little alterations in the first, and did me the honour to write one whole stanza;[1] but in the Rock he has not altered a word. Though only a tea visit, he staid with us till twelve. I was quite at my ease, and never once asked him to eat (drink he never does any thing but tea); while you, I dare say, would have been fidgetted to death, and would have sent half over the town for chickens, and oysters, and asparagus, and Madeira. You see how frugal it is to be well-bred, and not to think of such a vulgar renovation as eating and drinking.

[1] The stanza begins 'My scorn has oft,' &c.

London, 1776.

Again I am annoyed by the foolish absurdity of the present mode of dress. Some ladies carry on their heads a large quantity of fruit, and yet they would despise a poor useful member of society, who carried it there for the purpose of selling it for bread. Some, at the back of their perpendicular caps, hang four or five ostrich feathers, of different colours, &c. Spirit of Addison! thou pure and gentle shade, arise! thou who, with such fine humour, and such polished sarcasm, didst lash the cherry-coloured hood, and the party patches; and cut down, with a trenchant sickle, a whole harvest of follies and absurdities! awake! for the follies thou didst lash were but the beginning of follies; and the absurdities thou didst censure, were but the seeds of absurdities! Oh, that thy master-spirit, speaking and chiding in thy graceful page, could recal the blushes, and collect the scattered and mutilated remnants of female modesty!

We find another letter from one of her sisters, written about the same time, from which we shall make a humorous extract.

London, 1776.

If a wedding should take place before our return, don't be surprised,—between the mother of Sir Eldred, and the father of my much-loved Irene; nay, Mrs. Montagu says, if tender words are the precursors of connubial engagements, we may ex-

pect great things; for it is nothing but 'child'—'little fool'—'love,' and 'dearest.' After much critical discourse, he turns round to me, and with one of his most amiable looks, which must be seen to form the least idea of it, he says, 'I have heard that you are engaged in the useful and honourable employment of teaching young ladies.' Upon which, with all the same case, familiarity, and confidence, we should have done had only our own dear Dr. Stonehouse been present, we entered upon the history of our birth, parentage, and education; shewing how we were born with more desires than guineas; and how, as years increased our appetites, the cupboard at home began to grow too small to gratify them; and how, with a bottle of water, a bed, and a blanket, we sat out to seek our fortunes; and how we found a great house, with nothing in it; and how it was like to remain so, till, looking into our knowledge-boxes, we happened to find a little *larning*, a good thing when land is gone, or rather none: and so at last, by giving a little of this little *larning* to those who had less, we got a good store of gold in return; but how, alas! we wanted the wit to keep it.—'I love you both,' cried the inamorato—'I love you all five—I never was at Bristol.—I will come on purpose to see you—what! five women live happily together!—I will come and see you—I have spent a happy evening—I am glad I came—God for ever bless you; you live lives to shame duchesses.' He took his leave with so much warmth and tenderness, that we were quite affected at his manner.

If Hannah's head stands proof against all the adulation and kindness of the great folks here, why then, I will venture to say that nothing of this kind will hurt her hereafter. Two carriages at the door: Mrs. Boscawen and Sir Joshua; the latter to take us to an auction of pictures: the former paid a short visit, that she might not break in upon our engagements. Dr. Johnson and Hannah, last night, had a violent quarrel, till at length laughter ran so high on all sides, that argument was confounded in noise; the gallant youth, at one in the morning, set us down at our lodgings.

From Miss Martha More to one of her sisters.

Hampton, 1776.

We have been passing three days at the temple of taste, nature, Shakspeare, and Garrick; where every thing that could please the ear, charm the eye, and gratify the understanding, passed in quick succession. From dinner to midnight he entertained us in a manner infinitely agreeable. He read to us all the whimsical correspondence, in prose and verse, which, for many years, he had carried on with the first geniuses of this age. I have now seen him in his mellower light, when the world has been shaken off. He says he longs to enter into himself, and to study the more important duties of life, which he is determined upon doing that his whole *domestique* shall be under such regulations of order and sobriety as shall be both a credit to himself and an example to others. The next

time we go, Hannah is to carry some of her writing; she is to have a little table to herself, and to continue her studies; and he is to do the same.

The following extracts are from the letters of Hannah More to her family.

London, 1776.

I dined in the Adelphi yesterday. It was a particular occasion—an annual meeting, where none but men are usually asked. I was however of the party, and an agreeable day it was to me. I have seldom heard so much wit, under the banner of so much decorum. I mention this, because I was told it was a day of licence, and that every body was to say what they pleased. Colman and Dr. Schomberg were of the party; the rest were chiefly old doctors of divinity. I had a private whisper that I must dine there again to-day, to assist at the celebration of the birth-day. We had a little snug dinner in the library. At six, I begged leave to come home, as I expected my *petite assemblée* a little after seven. Mrs. Garrick offered me all her fine things, but, as I hate admixtures of finery and meanness, I refused every thing except a little cream, and a few sorts of cakes. They came at seven. The *dramatis personæ* were, Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, and Miss Reynolds; my beaux were Dr. Johnson, Dean Tucker, and last, but not least in our love, David Garrick. You know that wherever Johnson is, the confinement to the tea-table is rather a durable situation; and it was an hour and a half

before I got my enlargement. However, my ears were opened, though my tongue was locked, and they all stayed till near eleven.

Garrick was the very soul of the company, and I never saw Johnson in such perfect good humour. Sally knows we have often heard that one can never properly enjoy the company of these two unless they are together. There is great truth in this remark; for after the Dean and Mrs. Boscawen were withdrawn, and the rest stood up to go, Johnson and Garrick began a close encounter, telling old stories, 'e'en from their boyish days,' at Lichfield. We all stood round them above an hour, laughing in defiance of every rule of decorum and Chesterfield. I believe we should not have thought of sitting down or of parting, had not an impertinent watchman been saucily vociferous. Johnson outstaid them all, and sat with me half an hour.

I'll tell you the most ridiculous circumstance in the world. After dinner Garrick took up the Monthly Review (civil gentlemen, by the bye, these Monthly Reviewers), and read 'Sir Eldred' with all his pathos and all his graces. I think I never was so ashamed in my life; but he read it so superlatively, that I cried like a child. Only think what a scandalous thing, to cry at the reading of one's own poetry! I could have beaten myself; for it looked as if I thought it very moving, which, I can truly say, was far from being the case. But the beauty of the jest lies in this: Mrs. Garrick twinkled as well as I, and made as many apologies for crying at her husband's reading, as I did for crying at my

own verses. *She* got out of the scrape by pretending she was touched at the story, and *I*, by saying the same thing of the reading. It furnished us with a great laugh at the catastrophe, when it would really have been decent to have been a little sorrowful.

London, 1776.

Did I ever tell you what Dr. Johnson said to me of my friend the Dean of Gloucester? I asked him what he thought of him. His answer was *verbatim* as follows; 'I look upon the Dean of Gloucester to be one of the few excellent writers of this period. I differ from him in opinion, and have expressed that difference in my writings; but I hope what I wrote did not indicate what I did not feel, for I felt no acrimony. No person, however learned, can read his writings without improvement. He is sure to find something he did not know before.' I told him the Dean did not value himself on elegance of style. He said he knew nobody whose style was more perspicuous, manly, and vigorous, or better suited to his subject. I was not a little pleased with this tribute to the worthy Dean's merit, from such a judge of merit; that man, too, professedly differing from him in opinion.

Would you believe it? In the midst of all the pomps and vanities of this wicked town, I have taken it into my head to study like a dragon; I read four or five hours every day, and wrote ten hours yesterday. How long this will last I do not know—but I fear no longer than the bad weather.

I wish you could see a picture Sir Joshua has just finished, of the prophet Samuel, on his being called. 'The gaze of young astonishment' was never so beautifully expressed. Sir Joshua tells me that he is exceedingly mortified when he shows this picture to some of the great—they ask him who Samuel was? I told him he must get somebody to make an Oratorio of Samuel, and then it would not be vulgar to confess they knew something of him. He said he was glad to find that I was intimately acquainted with that devoted prophet. He has also done a St. John that bids fair for immortality. I tell him that I hope the poets and painters will at last bring the Bible into fashion, and that people will get to like it from taste, though they are insensible to its spirit, and afraid of its doctrines. I love this great genius, for not being ashamed to take his subjects from the most unfashionable of all books.

Keeping bad company leads to all other bad things. I have got the headache to-day, by raking out so late with that gay libertine Johnson. Do *you* know—*I* did not, that he wrote a quarter of the Adventurer? I made him tell me all that he wrote in the 'fugitive pieces.'

De Lolme told me he thought Johnson's late political pamphlets were the best things he had written; but I regret that such men should ever write a word of politics.

Mrs. Garrick had obtained a ticket to carry me to the Pantheon with her and a party; but I could not get the better of my repugnance to these sort

of places, and she was so good as to excuse me. I find my dislike of what are called public diversions greater than ever, except a play; and when Garrick has left the stage, I could be very well contented to relinquish plays also; and to live in London without ever again setting my foot in a public place.

Hampton, 1776.

I enclose you a little sonnet I sent the Garricks on their birth-day. I had but an hour to write it in, and had the headache, or it would have been better.

SONNET ON MR. AND MRS. GARRICK'S BIRTH-DAY.

ADDRESSED TO THE RIVER THAMES, AND WRITTEN IN THE TEMPLE AT HAMPTON.

Since first thy green waves through yon meadow stray'd,
O silver Thames, O gentle river, tell,
Hast thou a more harmonious pair survey'd
Than in these fairy-haunted gardens dwell?

I sing not of his muse, for well I ween
My song's unmarked where every bard approves,
Nor of his magic powers, which must be *seen*,
Not *told*—for telling lessens what it loves: —

Nor do I celebrate her form or face,
Inglorious praise! for other nymphs are fair,
And other nymphs may boast a transient grace;
Though they must boast it when she is not there: —

Back to thy source, thou, gentle Thames, shalt flow,
Ere soul more tuned to soul, or mind to mind,
Thy margin ever green shall proudly show,
Or in her bands celestial concord bind.

When I come back from Hampton I shall change my lodgings; not that I have any particular objections to these, but those I have taken are much more airy, large, and elegant: besides the use, when I please, of the whole house, I shall have a bed-chamber and a dressing-room for my own particular company; the master and mistress are themselves well-behaved sensible people, and keep good company; besides, they are fond of books, and can read, and have a shelf of books which they will lend me. The situation is pleasant and healthy —the centre house in the Adelphi.[1] Add to this, it is not a common lodging-house, they are careful whom they take in, and will have no people of bad character, or who keep irregular hours; so that on the whole, for the little time I remain in town, I think I shall be more comfortable in my new lodgings.

Adelphi, 1776.

Did I tell you we had a very agreeable day at Mrs. Boscawen's? I like Mr. Berenger[2] prodigiously. I met the Bunbury family at Sir Joshua's. Mr. Boswell (Corsican Boswell) was here last night; he is a very agreeable and good-natured man; he perfectly adores Johnson; they have this day set out together for Oxford, Lichfield, &c. that the Doctor may take leave of all his old friends and acquaintances, previous to

[1] Garrick's town house.

[2] Richard Berenger, Esq. many years Gentleman of the Horse and Equery to his late Majesty. He wrote a history of Horsemanship.

his great expedition across the Alps. I lament his undertaking such a journey at his time of life, with beginning infirmities; I hope he will not leave his bones on classic ground. I have here most spacious apartments, three rooms to myself. David Hume is at the point of death in a jaundice. Cadell told me to-day he had circulated six thousand of Price's book, and was rejoiced to hear that the Dean of Gloucester intended to answer it.

Adelphi, 1776.

We have had a great evening in the Adelphi: the principal people that I can now recollect were, Lord and Lady Camden, their daughters, Lady Chatham and daughters, Lord Dudley, Mr. Rigby, Mrs. Montagu, the Dean of Derry and his lady, Sir Joshua and his sister, Colman, Berenger, &c. &c.

You would take Lord Camden for an elderly physician, though I think there is something of genius about his nose. Did I excel in the descriptive, here would be a fine field for me to expatiate on the graces of the host and hostess, whose behaviour was all cheerfulness and good breeding: but lords delight not me, no, nor ladies neither, unless they are very chosen ones.

A relation of the Duchess of Chandos died at the Duchess's a few days ago, at the card-table: she was dressed most sumptuously;—they stripped off her diamonds, stuck her upright in a coach, put in two gentlemen with her, and sent her home

two hours after she was dead; at least so the story goes.

Baron Burland died as suddenly. After having been at the House of Lords he dined heartily, and was standing by the fire, talking politics to a gentleman. So you see, even London has its warnings if it would but listen to them. These are two signal ones in one week: but the infatuation of the people is beyond anything that can be conceived.

A most magnificent hotel in St. James's Street was opened last night for the first time, by the name of the 'Savoir Vivre;' none but people of the very first rank were there, so you may conclude the diversion was cards; and in one night, the very first time the rooms were ever used, the enormous sum of sixty thousand pounds was lost! Heaven reform us!

We had the other night a conversazione at Mrs. Boscawen's. What a comfort for me that none of my friends play at cards. Soame Jenyns and the learned and ingenious Mr. Cambridge were of the party. We had a few sensible ladies, and a very agreeable day, till the world broke in upon us, and made us too large for conversation. The sensible Mrs. Walsingham was there, as was Mrs. Newton, who gave me many invitations to St. Paul's.[1] Mr. Jenyns was very polite to me, and as he, his lady, and I were the first visitants, he introduced me himself to everybody that came after-

[1] The kindness and friendship of Bishop Newton and his lady to Mrs. H. More continued invariably through their lives.

wards, who were strangers to me. There is a fine simplicity about him, and a meek innocent kind of wit, in Addison's manner, which is very pleasant. The kind Mrs. Boscawen had made another party for me at her house, with Mr. Berenger, who is everybody's favourite, (even Dr. Johnson's) but I am unluckily engaged.

Cumberland's odes are come out. I tried to prevail on Mr. Cambridge to read them, but could not: he has a natural aversion to an ode, as some people have to a cat: one of them is pretty, but another contains a literal description of administering a dose of James's powders! Why will a man who has real talents, attempt a species of writing for which he is so little qualified? But so little do we poor mortals know ourselves, that I should not be surprised, if he were to prefer these odes to his comedies, which have real merit.'

London, 1776.

I dined yesterday with Captain[1] and Mrs. Middleton. Tell Dr. Stonehouse that I recommended the translation of Saurin's Sermons to Captain Middleton and Mrs. Bouverie. Captain M. intends writing to the doctor about them. How nobly eloqent they are! One little peculiarity I remark,—his more frequent use of the word *vice* than generally occurs in religious writings. I think sin is a theological, vice a moral, and crime a judicial term. There are so few people I meet with in this good

[1] Afterwards Lord Barham.

town to whom one can venture to recommend sermons, that the opportunity is not to be lost; though the misfortune is, that those who are most willing to read them, happen to be the very people who least want them. Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Carter, and some other of my friends were there.

Mrs. Boscawen came to see me the other day with the duchess, in her gilt chariot, with four footmen (as I hear), for I happened not to be at home. It is not possible for anything on earth to be more agreeable to my taste than my present manner of living. I am so much at my ease; have a great many hours at my own disposal: read my own books, and see my own friends; and, whenever I please, may join the most polished and delightful society in the world! Our breakfasts are little literary societies. There is generally company at meals, as they think it saves time, by avoiding the necessity of seeing people at other seasons. Mr. Garrick sets the highest value upon his *time* of anybody I ever knew. From dinner to tea we laugh, chat, and talk nonsense: the rest of his time is generally devoted to study. I detest and avoid public places more than ever, and should make a miserably bad fine lady! What most people come to London *for*, would keep me *from* it.

Adelphi, 1776.

I had promised Mr. Burrows I would certainly go to hear him at St. Clement's last Sunday, but was again disappointed. At Hampton church we heard a frivolous clergyman preach one of those

light compositions which it is impossible for one ever to think of again.

Alas! I dare not lie in bed in a morning, for the Garricks are as much my conscience here as the doctor is at Bristol.[1] A few evenings ago we were at Mrs. Vesey's; Tessier read; we were a moderate party; not forty: the Duchess Dowager of Beaufort was there, Lady Betty Compton, Lord and Lady Spencer, Lord and Lady Bateman, and a dozen other lords and ladies for aught I know. The old duchess looks amazingly well; I do not know a finer woman of her age.

We expect a large party every minute to breakfast, all the sensible, ingenious French folks, whom I believe I have mentioned before, with Lord North, &c. I find Mr. Boswell called upon you at Bristol, with Dr. Johnson; he told me so this morning when he breakfasted here, with Sir William Forbes and Dr. J.

London, 1776.

We have been again spending three days at Hampton. On the first, we were visited by our noble neighbours, the Pembrokes; and on the third, we dined at Richmond, at Sir Joshua's, with a very agreeable party. It was select, though much too large to please me. There was hardly a person in company that I would not have chosen as eminently agreeable; but I would not have chosen them all together. Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Elliot, Edmund, Richard, and William Burke, Lord Mahon, David

[1] Dr. Stonehouse.

Garrick, and Sir Joshua. We had a great deal of laugh, as there were so many leaders among the patriots, and had a great deal of attacking and defending, with much wit and good humour.

Adelphi, 1776.

I wish it were possible for me to give you the slightest idea of the scene I was present at yesterday. Garrick would make me take his ticket to go to the trial of the Duchess of Kingston; a sight which, for beauty and magnificence exceeded anything which those who were never present at a coronation, or a trial by peers, can have the least notion of. Mrs. Garrick and I were in full dress by seven. At eight we went to the Duke of Newcastle's, whose house adjoins Westminster Hall, in which he has a large gallery, communicating with the apartments in his house. You will imagine the bustle of five thousand people getting into one hall! yet in all this hurry we walked in tranquilly. When they were all seated, and the king-at-arms had commanded silence on pain of imprisonment, (which, however, was very ill observed,) the gentleman of the black rod was commanded to bring in his prisoner. Elizabeth, calling herself Duchess Dowager of Kingston, walked in, led by black rod and Mr. la Roche, courtseying profoundly to her judges. When she bent, the lord steward called out, 'Madam, you may rise;' which was taking her up before she was down. The peers made her a slight bow. The prisoner was dressed in deep mourning; a black hood on her head; her hair

modestly dressed and powdered; a black silk sacque, with crape trimmings; black gauze, deep ruffles, and black gloves. The counsel spoke about an hour and a quarter each. Dunning's manner is insufferably bad, coughing and spitting at every three words; but his sense and his expression, pointed to the last degree; he made her grace shed bitter tears. I had the pleasure of hearing several of the lords speak, though nothing more than proposals on common things. Among these were Lyttleton, Talbot, Townsend, and Camden. The fair victim had four virgins in white behind the bar. She imitated her great predecessor, Mrs. Rudd, and affected to write very often, though I plainly perceived she only wrote as they do their love epistles on the stage, without forming a letter. I must not omit one of the best things: we had only to open a door, to get at a very fine cold collation of all sorts of meats and wines, with tea, &c. a privilege confined to those who belonged to the Duke of Newcastle. I fancy the peeresses would have been glad of our places at the trial, for I saw Lady Derby and the Duchess of Devonshire with their workbags full of good things. Their rank and dignity did not exempt them from the 'villanous appetites' of eating and drinking.

Foote says that the Empress of Russia, the Duchess of Kingston, and Mrs. Rudd, are the three most extraordinary women in Europe; but the Duchess disdainfully, and I think unjustly, excludes Mrs. Rudd from the honour of deserving to make one in the triple alliance. The Duchess has but

small remains of that beauty of which kings and princes were once so enamoured. She looked very much like Mrs. Pritchard; she is large and ill-shaped; there was nothing white but her face, and had it not been for that, she would have looked like a bale of bombazeen. There was a great deal of ceremony, a great deal of splendour, and a great deal of nonsense: they adjourned upon the most foolish pretences imaginable, and did *nothing* with such an air of business as was truly ridiculous. I forgot to tell you the Duchess was taken ill, but performed it badly.

Adelphi, 1776.

We did not come to town till yesterday, and even then left Hampton with regret, as it is there we spend the pleasantest part of our time, uninterrupted by the idle, the gossipping, and the impertinent. On Tuesday, Lord and Lady Pembroke dined with us. The Countess is a pretty women, and my Lord a good-humoured, lively, chatty man; but Roscius was, as usual, the life and soul of the company, and always says so many home things, pointed at the vices and follies of those with whom he converses, but in so indirect, well-bred, and good-humoured a manner, that every body must love him; and none but fools are ever offended, or will expose themselves so much as to own they are. Politicians say that there is a great prospect of an accommodation with America. Heaven grant it, before more human blood is spilt! But even this topic has, I think, a little given place to the trial.

For my part, I cannot see why there should be so much ceremony used, to know whether an infamous woman has one or two husbands. I think a *lieutenant de police* would be a better judge for her than the peers, and I do not see why she should not be tried by Sir John Fielding, as a profligate of less note would have been.

Adelphi, 1776.

I have the great satisfaction of telling you that Elizabeth, calling herself Duchess dowager of Kingston, was this very afternoon *undignified and unduchessed*, and very narrowly escaped being burned in the hand. If you have been half as much interested against this unprincipled, artful, licentious woman as I have, you will be rejoiced at it as I am. All the peers, but two or three (who chose to withdraw), exclaimed with great emphasis, 'Guilty, upon my honour!' except the Duke of N——, who said, 'Guilty erroneously, but not intentionally.' Great nonsense, by the bye, but peers are privileged.

On Wednesday, we had a very large party to dinner, consisting chiefly of French persons of distinction and talents, who are come over to take a last look at the beams of the great dramatic sun, before he sets. We had beaux esprit, femmes sçavantes, academicians, &c. and no English person except Mr. Gibbon, the Garricks, and myself. We had not one English sentence the whole day. Last night we were at our friends the Wilmots', in Bloomsbury Square. There was a great deal of

good company—the Bishop of Worcester, his lady, Sir Ralph Paine and lady, Mrs. Boscawen, and half a score others.

This morning Lord Camden breakfasted with us. He was very entertaining. He is very angry that the Duchess of Kingston was not burned in the hand. He says, as he was once a professed lover of her's, he thought it would have looked ill-natured and ungallant for him to propose it; but that he should have acceded to it most heartily, though he believes he should have recommended a cold iron.

This evening I am engaged to spend with a foreigner. He is a Dane, unjustly deprived of his father's fortune by his mother's marrying a second time. I have never yet seen him, but I hear that all the world is to be there, which I think is a little unfeeling, as he is low-spirited at times, even to madness. For my part, from what I have heard, I do not think the poor young man will live out the night.

Adelphi, 1776.

I imagine my last was not so ambiguous but that you saw well enough I staid in town to see Hamlet, and I will venture to say, that it was such an entertainment as will probably never again be exhibited to an admiring world. But this general panegyric can give you no idea of *my* feelings; and particular praise would be injurious to his excellences.

In every part he filled the whole soul of the spectator, and transcended the most finished idea

of the poet. The requisites for Hamlet are not only various, but opposed. In him they are all united, and as it were concentrated. One thing I must particularly remark, that, whether in the simulation of madness, in the sinkings of despair, in the familiarity of friendship, in the whirlwind of passion, or in the meltings of tenderness, he never once forgot he was a prince; and in every variety of situation, and transition of feeling, you discovered the highest polish of fine breeding and courtly manners.

Hamlet experiences the conflict of many passions and affections, but filial love ever takes the lead; *that* is the great point from which he sets out, and to which he returns; the others are all contingent and subordinate to it, and are cherished or renounced, as they promote or obstruct the operation of this leading principle. Had you seen with what exquisite art and skill Garrick maintained the subserviency of the less to the greater interests, you would agree with me, of what importance to the perfection of acting, is that consummate good sense which always pervades every part of his performances.

To the most eloquent expression of the eye, to the hand-writing of the passions on his features, to a sensibility which tears to pieces the hearts of his auditors, to powers so unparalleled, he adds a judgment of the most exquisite accuracy, the fruit of long experience and close observation, by which he preserves every gradation and transition of the passions, keeping all under the controul of a just dependence and natural consistency. So naturally,

indeed, do the ideas of the poet seem to mix with his own, that he seemed himself to be engaged in a succession of affecting situations, not giving utterance to a speech, but to the instantaneous expression of his feelings, delivered in the most affecting tones of voice, and with gestures that belong only to nature. It was a fiction as delightful as fancy, and as touching as truth. A few nights before I saw him in 'Abel Drugger;' and had I not seen him in both, I should have thought it as possible for Milton to have written 'Hudibras,' and Butler 'Paradise Lost,' as for one man to have played 'Hamlet' and 'Drugger' with such excellence.

I found myself, not only in the best place, but with the best company in the house, for I sat next the orchestra, in which were a number of my acquaintance (and those no vulgar names) Edmund and Richard Burke, Dr. Warton, and Sheridan.

Have you seen an ode to Mr. Pinchbeck, by the author of the 'Heroic Epistle?' There is a little slight sarcasm on Cumberland, the Dean of Gloucester, and Dr. Johnson. There is something of wit in it, but I think it is by no means worthy of the author of the 'Heroic Epistle,' which is, in my opinion, the best satire, both for matter and versification, that has appeared since the 'Dunciad.' I do not include Johnson's two admirable imitations of 'Juvenal,' which are more in the manner of Pope's other satires.

Extract of a letter from Miss H. More to the Rev. Dr. Stonehouse.

May, 1776.

I have at last had the entire satisfaction to see Garrick in 'Hamlet.' I would not wrong him or myself so much as to tell you what I think of it; it is sufficient that you have seen him; I pity those who have not. Posterity will never be able to form the slightest idea of his pretensions. The more I see him, the more I wonder and admire. Whenever he does any thing capital, they are so kind as to get me into the pit, which increases the pleasure ten-fold. He has acted all his comic characters for the last time. I have seen him within these three weeks take leave of Benedict, Sir John Brute, Kitely, Abel Drugger, Archer, and Leon. It seems to me, on these occasions, as if I had been assisting at the funeral obsequies of the different poets. I feel almost as much pain as pleasure. He is quite happy in the prospect of his release.

Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

Adelphi, May 12, 1776.

A few nights before I saw Garrick in Hamlet, I had seen him in Abel Drugger; and, had I not seen him in both, I should have thought that it would have been as impossible for Milton to have written 'Hudibras,' and Butler 'Paradise Lost,' as for the same man to have played Hamlet and Drugger with

such superlative and finished excellence. The more admirable he is, the more painful it is to reflect that I am now catching his departing glories. He is one of those summer suns, which shine brightest at their setting. Within these three weeks, he has appeared in Brute, Leon, Drugger, Benedict, Archer, &c. for the last time; and it appears like assisting at the funeral obsequies of these individual characters. When I see him play any part for the last time, I can only compare my mixed sensations of pain and pleasure to what I suppose I should feel, if a friend were to die and leave me a rich legacy. There is a certain sentiment of gratification and delight in the acquisition; but as you are beginning to indulge in it, it is all of a sudden checked, by recollecting on what terms you possess it, and that you purchase your pleasure at the costly price of losing him to whom you owe it.

I wrote the above two or three days ago, and intended to have sent it immediately; but happening to show it to Mrs. G. she was so pleased with my remarks on Hamlet and the performance, that they insisted on having a copy. Though they paid my foolish letter an undeserved compliment, yet I could not refuse to comply, and not having time to transcribe it, is the reason you did not hear from me sooner.

I am surprised to find myself still here. Could I have had the least idea of my remaining so long after I wrote to you last, I should not foolishly have deprived myself of the satisfaction of hearing from you. But though I have not heard *from* you,

I have frequently heard *of* you. I fancy my sisters will have set out on their western excursion before I shall see Bristol. I doubt not but they will find it a very pleasant scheme, and to Martha I hope it will be a beneficial one.

I last night saw Don Felix for the first time; it is an elegant and pleasing part, but Mrs. Yates did great injustice to the genteel character of Violante, in which Mrs. Barry got so much reputation, when she played it with Mr. Garrick. On Monday night he played King Lear, and it is literally true that my spirits have not yet recovered from the shock they sustained. I generally think the last part I see him in the greatest: but in regard to that night, it was the universal opinion that it was one of the greatest scenes ever exhibited. I called to-day in Leicester Fields, and Sir Joshua declared it was full three days before he got the better of it. The eagerness of people to see him is beyond any thing you can have an idea of. You will see half-a-dozen duchesses and countesses of a night, in the upper boxes: for the fear of not seeing him at all, has humbled those who used to go, not for the purpose of seeing, but of being seen; and they now courtesy to the ground for the worst places in the house.

I dined lately with your neighbour, Mr. Elliot, whom I like exceedingly: Mr. Gibbon, the three Burkes, Lord Mahon, and Lord Pitt were of the party. What a list of patriots! A few nights ago, we had an agreeable evening at Mrs. Vesey's; you know she is a favourite of mine, and indeed of every body that has the pleasure of knowing her.

We go to-morrow to smell the lilacs and syringas at Hampton. I long for the sweet tranquillity of that delicious retreat. We generally spend a day or two in a week there, particularly Sunday, which is no small relief to me.

How does your garden grow? Are your shrubs flourishing? I reckon the Bristol misses will be delighted with your charming prospect. My love to squire Edward. I have not time to look over this scrawl. My kind regards at the vicarage. Adieu, dear Madam,

Your's constantly and sincerely,

H. More.

I have been to the Adelphi. Garrick gave me the history of his reading to the king and queen, and went through the fable of the 'Blackbird and Royal Eagle,' which was his prologue. It is really very lively and entertaining. Some part of it is affecting, where he speaks of the sprightly blackbird, who was famous for his imitative powers, and could exactly mimic from the tender notes of the nightingale, to the low comic noises of the crow and magpie. But one day, happening to look on his once fine glossy plumage, he found that his feathers began to turn grey; his eye had lost its lustre; and he also began to be lame. This determined him to give up his mimicry, and he resolved to be silent, and not hop about from tree to tree, but confine himself to one snug bush. The royal eagle, however, hearing of the talents of the lively creature, sent for him to court, and insisted on hearing him

sing. This honour overturned all his prudent resolution; he found his feathers were restored to their native black, his eye resumed its fire, and he was himself again.

London, 1776.

Yesterday, good and dear Mrs. Boscawen came herself to fetch me to meet at dinner a lady I have long wished to see. This was Mrs. Delany. She was a Granville, and niece to the celebrated poet Lord Lansdowne. She was the friend and intimate of Swift. She tells a thousand pleasant anecdotes relative to the publication of the Tatler. As to the Spectator, it is almost too modern for her to speak of it. She was in the next room, and heard the cries of alarm when Guiscard stabbed Lord Oxford. In short, she is a living library of knowledge; and time, which has so highly matured her judgment, has taken very little from her graces or her liveliness. She has invited me to visit her; a singular favour from one of her years and character. Last night, I was again at Mrs. Boscawen's, where there was a very splendid assembly: there were above forty people, most of them of the first quality, but I am sure I shall not remember half of them.

I forgot to tell you I have just been to see Mrs. Montagu. I made it a point to go in the morning; thinking I might stand a chance of catching her alone, which indeed, to my great delight, I did; but just as we were beginning to enter into interesting conversation, the world, as usual, broke in.

CHAPTER III.

In the beginning of June 1776, Hannah More returned to Bristol after a six months' absence, four of which had been passed between the Adelphi and Hampton. It was remarked by her friends and family, that success and applause had made no change in her deportment. She brought back her native simplicity unsullied by the contact. The constitution of her mind was so opposed to affectation and art, that rank, literature, and fashion saw the bird escape as from the snare of the fowler, without losing a feather of its natural plumage, to soar at large in its own free element, and revisit its accustomed scenes.

We will here introduce two or three letters which passed about this time.

H. More to Mr. Garrick.

June 10, 1776.

I have devoured the newspapers for the last week with the appetite of a famished politician, to

learn if my general had yet laid down arms; but I find you go on with a true American spirit, destroying thousands of his Majesty's liege subjects, breaking the limbs of many, and the hearts of all. When I promised you I would not plague you with any of my nonsense till you were disengaged, could I possibly divine you would be so very good as to honour me with a letter?—aye, and a charming letter too, albeit a little one—it made me so proud and happy! But you are so used to make folks proud and happy that it is nothing to you; and what would be a violent effort to other people, slides naturally into your ordinary course of action.

I think, by the time this reaches you I may congratulate you on the end of your labours and the completion of your fame—a fame which has had no parallel, and will have no end. Yet whatever reputation the world may ascribe to you, I, who have had the happy privilege of knowing you intimately, shall always think you derived your greatest glory from the temperance with which you enjoyed it, and the true greatness of mind with which you lay it down. Surely, to have suppressed your talents in the moment of your highest capacity for exercising them, does as much honour to your heart as the exertion itself did to your dramatic character; but I cannot trust myself with this subject, because I am writing to the man himself; yet I ought to be indulged, for is not the recollection of my pleasures all that is left me of them? Have I not seen in one season that man

act seven-and-twenty-times, and rise each time in excellence, and shall I be silent? Have I not spent three months under the roof of that man and his dear charming lady, and received from them favours that would take me another three months to tell over, and shall I be silent?

But highly as I enjoy your glory, (for I do enjoy it most heartily, and seem to partake it too, as I think some rays of it fall on all your friends) yet I tremble for your health. It is impossible you can do so much mischief to the nerves of other people without hurting your own,—in Richard especially, where your murders are by no means confined to the Tower; but you assassinate all such of your audience as have hearts. I say I tremble lest you should suffer for all this; but it is now over, as I hope are the bad effects of it upon yourself. You may break your wand at the end of your trial, when you lay down the office of haut intendant of the passions; but the enchantment it raised you can never break, while the memories and feelings remain of those who were ever admitted into the magic circle.

This letter is already of a good impudent length, and to the person, of all others, who has the least time to read nonsense. I will not prolong my impertinence, but to beg and conjure that I may hear a little bit about your finishing night. The least scrap—printed or manuscript—paragraph or advertisement—merry or serious—verse or prose, will be thankfully received, and hung up in the temple of reliques.

Pray tell my sweet Mrs. Garrick I live on the hope of hearing from her. And tell her further that she and you have performed a miracle, for you have loaded one person with obligations, and have not made an ingrate.

Viva V. M. mille annos.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1776.

I wish you could have seen with what delight I received your kind and agreeable letter, my dear Madam. It was only a change from talking about you to talking with you; for it came precisely as a gentleman went out of the door, with whom I had held a long dispute upon your subject. That gentleman was Mr. Cambridge, and the dispute was about your charming *Dragon*,[1] which he admired beyond what I can tell you; and says it must absolutely be printed, lest a false copy get out. I did not contend that it *must not* be printed, but I assured him I would not give him a copy of it. He said he had almost learned it by heart, in only twice hearing it read by Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom I lent it, under an oath not to *take* or *give* a copy of it; which condition he strictly kept, like a faithful knight; but he too is of Mr. Cambridge's opinion, both in admiring this charming bagatelle, and in desiring that it should be printed. I trust then, my dear Madam, you will yield to these advisers, since both, you will allow,

[1] An ode to Mr. Garrick's house-dog, called Dragon.

have good taste, and are good judges. Mrs. Walsingham is likewise a wonderful admirer of dear honest Dragon. Certainly I waited for your permission to introduce him to her, and they have been acquainted these two months, but she admires him every day more and more.

Mrs. Montagu is returned safe and well from Paris. I had a very pleasant letter from Chaillot. Perhaps you have heard her admirable *bon mot,* in answer to Voltaire's calling Shakspeare *un fumier.* She said, 'Il en avoit le sort savoir d'enricher des terres ingrates.' You know Voltaire is reckoned to have stolen a great deal from Shakspeare, and he certainly is not grateful enough to own it. It is supposed that his anger against poor M. le Tourneux and the translators, is on account of the thefts aforesaid, which will soon be made manifest to all France. Mrs. M. was placed within sight and hearing of a Sceance d'Academie, at the Louvre; when M. d'Alembert read something from Voltaire, still very abusive against Shakspeare and his translators.

She was much offended at one of their churches. The preacher made a pause after the first part of his discourse, and was clapped so as to delay his beginning the second. Mrs. M. expressing her notion of the impropriety of this, was answered, that it was only on St. Louis's day that this sort of compliment was paid to a sermon, which was then considered rather as a political declamation.

Adieu, my dear Madam, believe me your truly affectionate F. B.

In April, 1777, she paid a visit to some relations in Norfolk, passing through London in her way: and we find several letters to her family during her visit, which give a very pleasant account of her tour, and of her intercourse with some of her kindred.

1777.

We arrived at Bungay a little before nine. In my way thither, Thorpe Hall, where my father was born, was pointed out to me. Our cousin Cotton's house is about a quarter of a mile out of the town; it is large, elegant, and very handsomely furnished. Bungay is a much better town than I expected, very clean, and pleasant. I am very glad, however, that the house is a little way out of it.

On Tuesday, we went to dine at Mr. John Cotton's, a romantic farm-house, buried in the obscurity of a deep wood. A great number of Cottons were assembled, of all ages, sexes, and characters. The old lady of the house told me that my father lay at her brother's house the last night he spent in this country. She took a great deal of pains to explain to me genealogies, alliances, and intermarriages, not one word of which can I remember. The table and the guests groaned with the hospitality of the entertainers, and we had wines that would not have disgraced the table of a Bristol alderman. I am at a loss what to do about the book which I hear Baretti has sent me. As I have not seen it, I know not what to say. It is but cold satisfaction to an author to be thanked for his book, unless he is

complimented for it too; and when an author really deserves praise, nothing is more delightful or more proper than to give it. A slowness to applaud, betrays a cold temper, or an envious spirit. I am very well. I eat brown bread and custards like a native; and we have a pretty, agreeable, laudable custom of getting tipsy twice a day upon Herefordshire cider. The other night, we had a great deal of company, eleven damsels, to say nothing of men. I protest I hardly do them justice, when I pronounce that they had, amongst them, on their heads, an acre and a half of shrubbery, besides slopes, grass-plats, tulip-beds, clumps of peonies, kitchen-gardens, and green-houses.[1] Mrs. Cotton and I had an infinite deal of entertainment out of them, though, to our shame be it spoken, some of them were cousins; but I have no doubt that they held in great contempt our roseless heads, and leafless necks.

1777.

We are just returned from an excursion through Norfolk, of about one hundred and sixty miles, to the extreme verge of the county, and nothing was ever more agreeable. Mr. and Mrs. Cotton and myself went comfortably in their chariot; and the only interruption was an attack of one of my headaches. As I do not excel in descriptions, you will

1 To this incredible but fashionable folly, Garrick put an end, by appearing in the character of Sir John Brute, dressed in female attire, with his cap decorated with a profusion of every sort of vegetable,—an immensely large carrot being dependent from each side.

not expect a minute detail of every thing I saw; however, as I know it will entertain my father even to know that I have been to such and such places, I will mention some that I can recollect. After Norwich, Dereham, and Swaffham, we went to the seat of the late Sir Andrew Fountaine, a very agreeable house, well-furnished, with a few good pictures, and one or two fine statues; many curiosities, particularly a large closet furnished with the most beautiful Delft-ware that can be imagined, much prettier, and more shewy, than china. The housekeeper, with an urbanity rarely to be found among the dependents of the great, very obligingly entertained us with cakes and wine.

We come now to Castle-Acre, a very fine piece of ruins, which it would cost an honest citizen who loves bow-windows, highway prospects, Chinese railing, chapel-looking stables, and steeples upon malt-houses, a thousand a year to keep in repair. It is not so large as Kenilworth, nor so beautiful as Tintern; but it has a considerable share of magnificence, and no small portion of beauty. It is so old that tradition itself does not pretend to say when it was built; but conjecture says, in her usual random language, that it has been destroyed a thousand years. From the triumphs of time, we were conducted to those of genius. Rainham is the seat of Lord Townsend, of which it is said that it was designed by Inigo Jones. It is a handsome, commodious, well-furnished house; with a few very good pictures, but one of Belisarius, surpassingly excellent. We next came to Houghton

Hall. As we rode up to it, I could not but look with veneration, in spite of all the littleness of party and the feuds of faction, on this edifice, built by the man who gave to Europe, for twenty years, the blessing of uninterrupted peace.[1] I will give you a description of it to-morrow. But no—description is at an end: for I might as well attempt any other impossible thing, as to give you the faintest idea of this truly splendid and princely dwelling. The pictures form by far the finest private collection in this kingdom; they are valued at more than two hundred thousand pounds. Claudes, Titians, and Salvators, are to be seen in the most delightful profusion; and most of these pieces are in the very best manner of their respective masters. The mind is almost bewildered by the beauty and number of these exquisite works.

The next place worthy of observation is Holkham Hall, the residence of the present Mr. Coke, and built by the late Lord Leicester. It is entirely of white brick, and take it for inside and outside, state and commodiousness, beauty and elegance, I never saw any thing comparable to it. The pictures are many and charming; some exquisite Guidos, particularly St. Catharine, and a Cupid inexpressibly fine. There are many admirable statues, a number of antiques, and some of the finest drapery I ever saw. In the article of sculpture, however, it yields to Wilton, as much as it exceeds most other places. There is a hall of pink-veined marble, of immense

[1] Sir Robert Walpole.

size, superior to anything of the kind in this nation; round it is a colonade of pink and white marble fluted. There is at Houghton so exquisite a dining-room with marble recesses, columns, and cisterns, and so luxurious, so cool, so charming, that I fancied myself at the villa of Pliny, or of Lucullus; and though I cannot bear oysters, yet I could have eaten some conchylia of the lake we saw out of the window; and I drank, in idea, a glass of Falernian, of twenty consulships, cooled by the elemental nymph. The next place deserving remark was Blickling; a very delightful seat, belonging to Lord Buckinghamshire. The situation is highly pleasing; more so to me than any I have seen in the east. You admire Houghton, but you wish for Blickling; you look at Houghton with astonishment, at Blickling with desire. There is there a *princely* library of wit and genius; forgive me for the epithet. I know it is an ambiguous one, but it popped out unawares. It is too much like what Voltaire said of the king of Prussia's poems, that they were *royal* verses. The park, wood, and water of this place, are superior to those of any of the neighbouring estates. But the charms of nature in this county are of the middling, calm, and pacific sort; she does not put forth her bolder, stronger, beauties. The striking, the grand, and the picturesque are here unknown. Brandon hill would be an alp in this country.

Between Aylsham and Norwich we went a little out of the road to see some famous mills. But the crane and the wheel are not quite so productive of

entertainment to me, as the instruments of Reynolds or Nollekens; though it must be confessed they are more necessary to the comfort of society; for even *I* find that the sickle does more for my existence than the chisel.

1777.

We are just returned from spending a few days with Mrs. Cotton's father and mother: they live very genteelly, have a noble garden, a handsome coach, &c. Their other daughter was married to a man of very good fashion, and their niece to Lord Hume. She was down on a visit at Ormsby. Her Lord, in return for the large fortune she brought him, makes her a very fashionable, negligent husband. I saw her on Sunday, poor thing! She sighs, and is no Countess at her heart. I have just received a present, from the author, of a new publication; it is a descriptive poem, called *Heath Hill.* How the bard could think it worth his while to look for me in this nook of creation, I cannot conceive. It seems to be very pretty. I have had a letter from Mrs. Barbauld, so full of elegance and good nature, with an invitation so frank and earnest, that I cannot leave the country without going to see her. I like my Brockdish cousins very well; she is a chatty, sensible woman, and he as deep in divinity as ever. I scarcely ever met with any person that had spent so much time, with so little detriment to his taste and manners, in controversial reading. It has left him very moderate and very charitable. I am quite a nobody in debate *here,* though I made

such a figure lately in explaining Arianism, Socinianism, and all the isms, to Mr. Garrick.

They rise here at five, and go to bed at nine; quite the thing for me you know; for my morning headaches, alas![1] preclude early rising: and while they have been asleep at night, I have gone through Dr. Maclaine's answer to Soame Jenyns. There is a good deal of wit and learning, and, I believe, truth and solidity, in some of his objections; others I think false and trivial, and his manner of stating them unfair. I do love Jenyns, but I do not contend for every part of his book: he is but a sucking child in christianity, and I am afraid has represented religion as a very uncomfortable thing. The deists will triumph at Maclaine's book, and exclaim, 'See how these Christians disagree!' Our cousins are very much concerned, and so am I, that their son is so fond of Bolingbroke and Hume. He is much too fashionable in his principles, though I believe very correct in his conduct. We frequently

[1] In her early life as well as in her declining years, Hannah More was subject to successive illnesses, which threw great impediments in the way of her intellectual exertions. She used to say that her frequent attacks of illness were a great blessing to her, independently of the prime benefit of cheapening life and teaching patience; for they induced a habit of industry not natural to her, and taught her to make the most of her *well* days. She laughingly added, it had taught her also to contrive employment for her sick ones; that from habit she had learnt to suit her occupations to every gradation of the measure of capacity she possessed. 'I never, (she said) afford a moment of a healthy day to transcribe, or put stops, or cross *t*s, or dot my *i*s. So that I find the lowest stage of my understanding may be turned to some account, and save better days for better things. I have learnt from it also to avoid procrastination, and that idleness which often attends unbroken health.'

give each other, in our indirect warfare, broad hints about infidelity and *methodism*.

After service yesterday morning I was very politely accosted by every well-dressed person in the congregation, all desiring to see me at their houses. The invitations were so warm and numerous that I was quite at a loss what to do. Amongst these kind people was an elderly gentleman, who says he is the oldest friend my father has in the world: a friendship of seventy years is something like; he was delighted to see me. I find Mr. Cotton was one of eight gentleman who were spirited enough to subscribe money towards building a house for their worthy minister. I have long ago found out that hardly any but plain frugal people ever do generous things. Our cousin, Mr. Cotton, who I dare say is often ridiculed for his simplicity and frugality, could yet lay down two hundred pounds without being sure of ever receiving a shilling interest, for the laudable purpose of establishing a man of merit, to whom he is still a very considerable contributor. This is commonly the case; and I am apt to conceive a prejudice against every body who makes a great figure, and to suspect those who *talk* generously.

I went to Mrs. Barbauld's on Thursday, intending only to spend one day: but the muses are such fascinating witches, that there is no getting away from them. We had an agreeable addition to our party, a Mr. Forster, who had sailed round the world, and has published his voyages in two volumes quarto. So that for a little remote village in

Suffolk, we do not make up a bad society. Mrs. B. and I have found out, that we feel as little envy and malice towards each other, as though we had neither of us attempted to 'build the lofty rhyme;' though she says 'this is what the envious and malicious can never be brought to believe.'

H. More to David Garrick.

Bungay, June 16, 1777.

I beg to return you my hearty thanks for your goodness in sending me your delightful prologue. That you should think me not unworthy to possess so great a treasure, flatters more than my vanity. And that you should send it to me so soon makes it doubly gratifying.

I have read and re-read it with all the malice of a friend, and pronounce that I never read a sweeter or more beautiful thing. The first stanza is strikingly descriptive; the second, elegantly pathetic; the image of the sun and shower very fine; and the third is highly poetical. The truth of the allusion is not once violated throughout, but is maintained with great spirit and exactness—the two extremes, and most difficult points to attain, I apprehend, in fable-writing. There is great ease too, in your versification, without the flimsiness which too often attends irregular numbers. I have written my sincere sentiments with the same frankness I should have done had they been less in favour of the poet. I speak with the more confidence of this composition, as I have now an

opportunity, by reading it myself, of forming a fairer judgment than I could have done from your reciting it.

We have at this place the 'tragedians of the city' of Norwich, who sojourn here a month once in two years, in their progress through the two counties. The dramatic furor rages terribly among the people—the more so, I suppose, from being allowed to vent itself so seldom. Every body goes to the play every night—that is, every other night, which is as often as they perform. Visiting, drinking, and even card-playing, is for this happy month suspended; nay, I question, if, like Lent, it does not stop the celebration of weddings, for I do not believe there is a damsel in the town who would spare the time to be married during this rarely-occurring scene of festivity.

It must be confessed, however, the good folks have no bad taste; for you are the favourite bard of Bungay: to prove that this is truth, I must tell you that I have already been to 'The Maid of Oaks' and 'The Clandestine Marriage;' and among this week's amusements, already given out, are 'Cymon,' 'Bon Ton' and 'Little Gipsy.' A certain Mr. Ibbott played Mr. Heidelburgh more than tolerably, and a pretty-looking Mrs. Simpson was very pleasing in Fanny. Griffiths, the Norwich manager, did Lord Ogleby, but was rather languid than elegant, and mistook a feebleness of exertion for refinement of breeding; yet in my poor judgment he rather did it deficiently than falsely. I think the part of Henry was pretty well conceived, though inadequately

acted, by one Dancer. It was received with great applause. I find I have been sadly mauled in some of the daily papers. I cannot get to see them. I did not think I was of consequence enough: they tell me it is Kenrick.

I hear Baretti has been civil enough to send me one of his books on Shakspeare, but I have it not here; it is a strange undertaking; slippery ground, I think; an Italian author, to write about our divine English dramatist, and that in the French language!

The day before I came to town I received a present from De Lolme of his new book; I have only dipped into it. The truth is, I am half afraid to read it, for it was accompanied with a very sprightly agreeable letter, apologizing for some queer things in it, which he expects I shall censure very much, or, at least, look very grave at. I suppose, however, it may be safely read by a good Protestant; it being, I suspect, a satire on the foolish austerities of the church of Rome; something in Stillingfleet's way.

Many thanks, dear sir, for your good and wholesome advice about my play. I do nothing, except regret my own idleness. I tremble for my fifth act; but I am afraid I shall never make others tremble at it.

My love and duty to my sweet Mrs. Garrick, and my thankful compliments to the young lady, to whose transcription I am so much obliged; she is astonishingly correct,—not the smallest error. Pardon this nonsense, dear Sir, in

Your obliged and obedient,

H. More.

From Hannah More to her Sister.

Hampton, 1777.

As soon as I got to London, I drove straight to the Adelphi, where to my astonishment I found a coach waiting for me to carry me to Hampton.

Upon my arrival here I was immediately put in possession of my old chamber. Garrick is all good humour, vivacity and wit. While I think of it, I must treat you with a little distich which Mrs. Barbauld wrote extempore, on my showing my Felix Buckles (the elegant buckles which Garrick wore the last time he ever acted the part of Don Felix, and with which he presented me as a relic.)

'Thy buckles, O Garrick, thy friend may now use,
But no mortal hereafter shall tread in thy shoes.'

Last Wednesday we went to town for a night, when Dr. Burney sat an hour or two with us. We have had a great deal of company here, lords, ladies, wits, critics, and poets. Last Saturday we had a very agreeable day. Our party consisted of about twelve; for these dear people understand society too well ever to have very large parties. The Norfolk Windham, Sheridan, and Lord Palmerston said the most lively things. But Roscius surpassed himself, and literally kept the table in a roar for four hours. He told his famous story of 'Jack Pocklington' in a manner so entirely new, and so infinitely witty, that the company have done nothing but talk of it ever since. I have often

heard of this story: it is of a person who came to offer himself for the stage, with an impediment in his speech. He gives the character, too, in as strong a manner as Fielding could have done.

After supper, on Sunday, Garrick read to us, out of Paradise Lost, that fine part on diseases and old age. Dr. Cadogan and his agreeable daughter have spent a day and a night here. The Doctor gave me some lectures on anatomy, and assures me that I am now as well acquainted with secretion, concoction, digestion, and assimilation, as many a wise-looking man in a great wig. We go, on Friday, into Hampshire, to Mr. Wilmot's. Lord and Lady Bathurst are to be of the party. I should be apt to suspect that the presence of a lord-chancellor was not very likely to contribute to mirth; but I don't think all the great officers of state put together could have gravity enough to damp the fire of Garrick, or blunt the edge of his wit. As soon as we return from Farnborough Place, I shall quit the rosy bowers of Hampton, and conclude my very long and pleasant campaign.

From the same to the same.

Farnborough Place, 1777.

We reached this place yesterday morning. You will judge of the size of the house, when I tell you there are eleven visitors, and all perfectly well accommodated. The Wilmots live in the greatest magnificence; but what is a much better thing, they live also rationally and sensibly. On Sunday

evening, however, I was a little alarmed; they were preparing for music (sacred music was the *ostensible* thing), but before I had time to feel uneasy, Garrick turned round, and said, 'Nine,[1] you are a *Sunday woman*; retire to your room—I will recal you when the music is over.'

The *great seal* disappointed us, but we have Lady Bathurst, Lady Catharine Apsley, Dr. Kennicott, the Hebrew professor of Oxford, his wife, a very agreeable woman (though she copies Hebrew),[2] besides the Garricks and two or three other very clever people. We live with the utmost freedom and ease imaginable, walking all together, or in small parties, chatting, reading, or scribbling, just as we like. We are now come to town on business. I shall set out for Bristol on Friday.

At this visit to Mr. Wilmot, a friendship commenced between Hannah More and every individual of the party, which lasted during their respective lives. She returned to Bristol in August, 1777, after an absence of five months, and about this time received the following letters from Mr. Garrick.

1 An appellation he generally gave her.

2 It should be here mentioned to her honour, that she took the trouble of acquiring this language for the sole purpose of qualifying herself for correcting the press of her husband's great work.

Mr. Garrick to Miss H. More.

MY DEAR NINE,

We have been upon the ramble for near three weeks, and your ode did not reach me till Monday last. Good, and very good—partial, and very partial. Mrs. Garrick (who sends her best wishes) and her lord and master, set out for Bath the beginning of next month. Though my doctors have extorted a vow from me, that I shall neither dine out nor give dinners, while I stay at Bath; yet I had a mental reservation with regard to Bristol. However, if I continue sick and peevish, I had better keep my ill humours at home, and for my wife alone. She is bound to them, and so reconciled to them by long use, that she can go to sleep in the midst of a good scolding, as a good sailor can while the guns are firing.

Mrs. Garrick is studying your two acts. We shall bring them with us, and she will criticise you to the bone. A German commentator (Montaigne says) will suck an author dry. She is resolved to dry you up to a slender shape, and has all her wits at work upon you.

I am really tired—my thumb is guilty, but my heart is free. I could write till midnight, but if I don't finish directly, I shall be obliged, from pain, to stop short at what I have more pleasure in declaring, that I am, please your Nineship,

Most truly your's,

D. GARRICK.

From same to same.

Essex, July 9, 1777.

MY DEAREST OF HANNAHS,

You must have thought me lost, mad, or dead, that I have not sent you a morsel of affection for some time. I have an excuse, if there can be any for the neglect of such a friend! We are now with Mr. Rigby[1] and some ladies, our particular friends, by the sea-side; and while I am writing this in my dressing-room, I see no less than fifty vessels under sail, and one, half an hour ago, saluted us with thirteen guns. Among all the news, foreign and domestic, that travel through and about Bristol, have you not yet heard that *Mrs. Garrick and I were separated?* Tell the truth, dear Nine, and shame you know whom. To our very great surprise a great friend of ours came from London; and to his greater surprise, found us laughing over our tea under our walnut-tree; he took me aside, and told me it was all over the town, from Hyde Park Corner to Whitechapel dunghill, that I had parted with Mrs. Garrick. You may easily suppose this was great matter of mirth to us. We imagined somebody had had a mind to joke with our friend, but upon inquiry we found that such a report had been spread; but to comfort your heart, be assured that we are still as much united as ever, and are both so well, that there is a prospect of dragging on our clogs

[1] The Right Honourable Richard Rigby.

for some years to come. Colman is preparing his comedy, of four acts, called the '*Suicide*,' a very dangerous subject, but the actors say it must have great success.

My theatrical curiosity diminishes daily, and my vanity, as an author, is quite extinct; though, by the bye, I have written a copy of verses to Mr. Baldwin, the member for Shropshire, upon his attack upon me in the House of Commons. He complained that a celebrated gentleman was admitted into the house when everybody else was excluded, and *that I gloried in my situation.* Upon these last words my muse has taken flight, and with success. I have described the different speakers, and it is said well, and strongly, and true. I read them to Lord North, Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, Mr. Rigby, &c. and they were all pleased. If I have time before I am obliged to send away this long letter, you shall have the first copy, though you must take care not to suffer them to go from your own hands. I have, upon my word, given them to nobody. Burke and Mr. Townsend behaved nobly upon the occasion. The whole house groaned at poor Baldwin, who is reckoned, *par excellence,* the dullest man in it; and a question was nearly going to be put, to give me an exclusive privilege to go in whenever I pleased. In short, I am a much greater man than I thought.

Whenever I receive your story, I shall con it over most unmercifully. My wife this moment tells me that I must send you a double portion of

her love; and she has added, that, if the vinegar is but half as sharp as your pen, or as your temper is sweet, she shall be most thankful for it; There is German wit for you. I shall deliver the overflowings of your heart to her in all the purity of affection. We are going to Lady Spencer's, for ten days, in half an hour. Our loves to all about you.

Most affectionately and
faithfully yours,
D. GARRICK.

From same to same.

Adelphi, Oct. 17, 1777.

Shame! shame! shame!

You may well say so, my dear madam; but indeed I have been so disagreeably entertained with the gout running all about me, from head to heel, that I have been unfit for the duties of friendship; and very often for those which a good husband, and a good friend, should never fail performing. I must gallop over this small piece of paper; it was the first I snatched up, to tell you that my wife has your letter, and thinks it a fine one and a sweet one.

I was at court to-day, and such work they made with me, from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Page of the Back Stairs, that I have been suffocated with compliments. We have wanted you at some of our private hours. Where's the Nine? we want the Nine! Silent was every muse!

Cambridge said yesterday, in a large company

at the Bishop of Durham's, where I dined, that your ode to my house-dog was a very witty production; and he thought there was nothing to be altered or amended except in the last stanza, which he thought the only weak one. I am afraid that you asked me to do something for you about the parliament, which, in my multitude of matters, was overlooked; pray, if it is of consequence, let me know it again, and you may be assured of the intelligence you want.

The last new tragedy, '*Semiramis*,' has, though a bare translation, met with great success. The prologue is a bad one, as you may read in the papers, by the author: the epilogue is grave, but a sweet pretty elegant morsel, by Mr. Sheridan; it had deservedly great success. Mr. Mason's Caractacus is not crowded, but the men of taste, and classical men, admire it much. Mrs. Garrick sends a large parcel of love to you all. I send mine in the same bundle. Pray write soon, and forgive me all my delinquencies. I really have not time to read over my scrawl, so pray decipher it, and excuse me,

Ever yours, most affectionately,

D. GARRICK.

CHAPTER IV.

We find Hannah More again in London in the November of the same year, 1777. Her tragedy of Percy had been accepted by Mr. Harris of Covent Garden, and was to be brought out without delay.

On her arrival in town, she thus writes to her sister, from her lodgings in Gerrard Street.

1777.

I believe I shall go to Hampton to-morrow to stay two or three days. They insist upon it, and I think it will be of service to me, if it be only to keep me quiet for a few days. Mrs. Garrick says I shall have my own comfortable room, with a good fire, and 'with all the lozenges and all the wheys in the world.' You may be sure this was her own expression. Mr. Garrick was at the Chancellor's this morning. It is impossible to show more friendly anxiety than both *he* and Lady Bathurst do for the success of Percy. The play seldom comes into my head unless it be mentioned. I am at present very tranquil about it. The town is rather empty, but who's afraid?

Gerrard Street, 1777.

It is impossible to tell you of all the kindness and friendship of the Garricks; he thinks of nothing, talks of nothing, writes of nothing but Percy. He is too sanguine; it will have a fall, and so I tell him. When Garrick had finished his prologue and epilogue, (which are excellent) he desired I would pay him. Dryden, he said, used to have five guineas a piece, but as he was a richer man he would be content if I would treat him with a handsome supper and a bottle of claret. We haggled sadly about the price, I insisted that I could only afford to give him a beef steak and a pot of porter; and at about twelve we sat down to some toast and honey, with which the temperate bard contented himself. Several very great ones made interest to hear Garrick read the play, which he peremptorily refused. I supped on Wednesday night at Sir Joshua's: spent yesterday morning at the Chancellor's, and the evening at Mrs. Boscawen's, lady Bathurst being of the party.

What dreadful news from America! we are a disgraced, undone nation. What a sad time to bring out a play in! when, if the country had the least spark of virtue remaining, not a creature would think of going to it. But the levity of the times will, on this occasion, be of some service to me.

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Mr. Garrick's study, Adelphi, ten at night.

He himself puts the pen into my hand, and bids me say that all is just as it should be. Nothing was ever more warmly received. I went with Mr. and Mrs. Garrick; sat in Mr. Harris's box, in a snug dark corner, and behaved very well, that is, very quietly. The prologue and epilogue were received with bursts of applause; so indeed was the whole; as much beyond my expectation as my deserts! Mr. Garrick's kindness has been unceasing.

Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

DEAR MADAM,

No one can more sincerely rejoice in the triumph of last night than myself, unless some friend, equally affectionate, was of a disposition so timid as to doubt of your success, which I never did for one moment. I thought the divine muses would be more than a match for the infernal powers, and though Cerberus showed a disposition to bark, and the Hydra to hiss, the one would only prove himself an ill-natured cur, the other a silly goose—their clamours were all drowned in the universal plaudit.

I have had such a pain in my face as has obliged me to be muffled up for these six weeks, but I am getting better, and have sent to the box-keeper for boxes for your third and sixth night, and hope also to attend the ninth, though I dare not make so distant an engagement with precarious health.

In any situation I could not flatter myself with being of use as a critic; you had Mr. Garrick, who feels so truly, as renders criticism needless, and who has also the critical art in such perfection, that he would be the best judge if he had no feeling.

I have only to wish you health to wear your bays with pleasure, and that you may ever be as you have been, the pride of your friends and the humiliation of your enemies. With great esteem,

I am, dear Madam,

Your most affectionate and
obliged humble servant,
ELIZABETH MONTAGU.

H. More to her sister.

Gerrard Street, 1777.

I may now venture to tell you, (as you extorted a promise from me to conceal nothing) what I would not hazard last night,—that the reception of Percy exceeds my most sanguine wishes. I am just returned from the second night, and it was, if possible, received more favourably than on the first. One tear is worth a thousand hands, and I had the satisfaction to see even the men shed them in abundance.

The critics, (as is usual) met at the Bedford last night, to fix the character of the play. If I were a heroine of romance, and were writing to my confidante, I should tell you all the fine things that were said, but as I am a real living Christian woman, I do not think it would be so modest;

I will only say, as Garrick does, that I have had so much flattery, that I might, if I would, choke myself in my own pap.

Northumberland House, Dec. 29, 1777.

Dr. Percy[1] waits on Mrs. More with his best thanks for her most invaluable present of 'Percy,' corrected, &c. with her own hand, which he shall ever highly value, and keep as a pledge of friendship. He should not have delayed returning his sincere acknowledgments so long, but he has been for many days past, wholly engaged in regulating and dispensing the Duke's annual charity to many hundreds of poor.

Gerrard Street, 1777.

Yesterday morning Dr. Percy was announced to me. When he came in he told me he was sent by the Duke of Northumberland and Earl Percy to congratulate me on my great success; to inform me of the general approbation, and to thank me in their names for the honour I had done them. That the duke and my lord were under much concern at not being able to attend the play; both father and son having the gout. They sent, however, each for a ticket, for which they paid as became the blood of the Percys; and in so genteel and respectful a manner, that it was impossible for the nicest pride to take umbrage at it.

I am more flattered with the honour this noble

[1] Bishop of Dromore.

family have done me, because I did not solicit their attention, nor would I even renew my acquaintance with Dr. Percy on coming to town, lest it should look like courting the notice of his patrons. *Je suis un peu fière.*

They are playing *Percy* at this moment for the seventh time: I never think of going. It is very odd, but it does not amuse me. I had a very brilliant house last night. It is strange, but I hear Lord Lyttleton[1] has been every night since the play came out. I do not deserve it, for I always abuse him. I have the great good fortune to have the whole town warm in my favour, and the writers too, except ——— and ———; these two are very ill of the yellow-jaundice—weak men to be disturbed at so feeble an enemy! Rival I am not to either of them, or to any body else: for the idea of competition never entered my head. But these two, looking on themselves as the greatest tragic writers of the age, consider me as the usurper of their rights. Hoole and Mason are much more generous; the reason, I suppose, is, they are better poets. The Duke of Northumberland has sent to thank me for a copy of the play. My Lord bid Dr. Percy tell me it was impossible to express how exactly I had pleased him in the manner of wording the inscription.

Last night was the ninth night of Percy. It was

[1] Son of the first Lord Lyttleton.

a very brilliant house; and *I* was there. Lady North did me the honour to take a stage box. I trembled when the speech against the wickedness of going to war was spoken, as I was afraid my lord was in the house, and that speech, though not written with any particular design, is so bold, and always so warmly received, that it frightens me; and I really feel uneasy till it is well over. Mrs. Montagu had a box again; which, as she is so consummate a critic, and is hardly ever seen at a public place, is a great credit to the play. Lady B. was there of course; and I am told she has not made an engagement this fortnight, but on condition she should be at liberty to break it for Percy. I was asked to dine at the chancellor's two or three days ago, but happened to be engaged to Mrs. Montagu, with whom I have been a good deal lately. We also spent an agreeable evening together at Dr. Cadogan's, where she and I, being the only two monsters in the creation who never touch a card, (and laughed at enough for it we are) had the fireside to ourselves; and a more elegant and instructive conversation I have seldom enjoyed. I met Mrs. Chapone one day at Mrs. Montagu's; she is one of Percy's warmest admirers; and as she does not go to plays, but has formed her judgment in the closet, it is the more flattering. I have been out very little except to particular friends. I believe it was a false delicacy, but I could not go to any body's house, for fear they should think I came to be praised or to hear the play talked of.

Gerrard Street, 1777.

I am at this moment as quiet as my heart can wish, and quietness is my definition of happiness. I had no less than five invitations to dine abroad to-day, but preferred the precious and rare luxury of solitude. I was much diverted at the play the other night, when Douglas tears the letter which he had intercepted; an honest man in the shilling gallery, vexed it had fallen into the husband's hands instead of the lover's, called out—'Do pray send the letter to Mr. Percy.' I think some of you might contrive to make a little jaunt, if it were only for one night, and see the *bantling*. Adieu, and some of you come.

The sisters complied with this invitation, and here follows an extract from one of their letters.

January, 1778.

Just returned from Percy, the theatre overflowed prodigiously, notwithstanding their Majesties and the School for Scandal at the other house. Yes: we did overflow, the twelfth night! On entering the parlour, where Hannah was sitting alone, our eyes were greeted with the sight of a wreath, composed of a Roman laurel, ingeniously interwoven, and the stems confined within an elegant ring. From whence you will ask could such a fanciful thought proceed? I answer—from Mrs. Boscawen. It originated at Glanvilla, where the wreath was made. The letter which accompanied it was an elegant morceau.

I enclose our sister's *poetical* acknowledgment of this piece of gallanterie.

TO THE HONOURABLE MRS. BOSCAWEN.

The laurel, fostered by your hand,
With *me* will never grow;
The beauteous wreath your fingers twined,
Would wither on *my* brow.

Apollo, who his Daphne seeks
Transformed to this fair tree,
Would frown to see his darling plant
Thus ornamenting *me*.

But when I told the angry power
You placed it on my brow,
'Yes; 'tis my darling plant, (he cried)
Full well I know it now.

'But give it back, presumptuous maid,
Restore my fav'rite tree,
Let her who gave it thee receive
This precious boon from me.

'Tell her to guard my sacred plant
From every chilly blast,
To crown her heroes yet to come,
To crown her heroes past.

'Nor let her fear, to those she loves,
To give this boon away;
For her the faithful *myrtle* blooms,
For her the sage's bay.

'And even thou shalt claim a name,
And challenge some renown;
Boscawen's friendship is thy fame,
Her praise, thy LAUREL CROWN.'

Friday a card from Lady —— to engage Hannah to dine with her on Sunday, which she, being of the

Christian faction, declined. Yesterday, when we were all seated in the drawing-room in the Adelphi, a gentleman was announced by the name of Home, (author of the Tragedy of Douglas.) Mr. Garrick took Hannah by the hand, and approaching the stranger, said, he begged leave to introduce the *Percy* to the *Douglas;* upon which Mr. Home expressed his desire that the alliance might be again renewed; and all the company with pleasure took notice, it was the Douglas that first sued to the Percy.

Mrs. Garrick tells us that when they were at Althorp, Mr. Garrick read Percy to all the party at Lord Spencer's. Though the first edition of the play was near four thousand, and it has only been printed a fortnight, Cadell yesterday sent for a corrected copy, in order to forward the second edition as fast as possible.

Hannah resumes the correspondence.

1778.

Yesterday I dined at Sir Joshua's. Just as they were beginning to offer their nightly sacrifice to their idol Loo, I took it into my head to go and see Mrs. Barry in the mad scene in the last act of Percy, in which she is so very fine, that though it is my own nonsense, I always see that scene with pleasure. I called on a lady, not choosing to go alone, and we got into the front boxes. On opening the door I was a little hurt to see a very indifferent house. I looked on the stage, and saw the scene was the

inside of a prison, and that the heroine, who was then speaking, had on a linen gown. I was quite stunned, and really thought I had lost my senses, when a smart man in regimentals, began to sing, 'How happy could I be with either.' I stared and rubbed my eyes, thinking I was in a dream; for all this while I was such a dunce, that I never discovered that they were acting the 'Beggar's Opera.' At length, upon inquiry, I found that Lewis had been taken extremely ill, and that hand-bills had been distributed to announce another play. Many sober personages shook their heads at me, as much as to say—How finely we are caught. Among these were Mr. D——, the Prebendary, who came under the same mistake: in another box was Dr. Percy, who, I vainly thought, looked rather glum. But the best of all was Sir William Ashurst, who sat in a side box, and was perhaps one of the first judges who ever figured away at the 'Beggars' Opera,' that strong and bitter satire against the professions, and particularly his.

Monday night, 1778.

At the latter part of this evening Mr. Home came in; I was quite hurt to see him. He is a worthy gentlemanlike man. He congratulated me on my success, and said Alfred[1] had not hurt me much. There was no replying to this: so I said nothing: condolence would have been insult. Tuesday I dined at Mr. Wilmot's, with an agreeable

[1] This tragedy was brought out before Percy, and lived only four nights.

party. When I came home I found an invitation to dine the following day at Sir Joshua's, and in the Adelphi. I could accept of neither, being pre-engaged to dine with Mrs. Delany. Our party, like our dinner, was small, excellent, and well chosen. It consisted only of Mrs. Delany, Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Chapone, and one very agreeable man. The Duchess of Portland, and all Mrs. Delany's chosen friends were appointed for the evening. I dined yesterday at Garrick's, with the sour crout[1] party. Lady Bathurst came to see me yesterday before I was up: 'tis well I was ill, or I should have had a fine trimming, for she makes breakfast for the chancellor every day before nine, during the whole winter. She is very angry that I go to see her so seldom. I am not sorry that if I do affront my friends, it is generally in this way; but I always think people will like me the less the more they see of me.

Mrs. Garrick came to see me this morning, and wished me to go to the Adelphi, which I declined, being so ill. She would have gone herself to fetch me a physician, and insisted upon sending me my dinner, which I refused; but at six this evening, when Garrick came to the Turk's head to dine, there accompanied him, in the coach, a minced chicken in a stew-pan, hot, a canister of her fine tea, and a pot of cream. Were there ever such people! Tell it not in Epic, nor in Lyric, that the

[1] This was a meeting of learned men once a week, at a dinner in which sour crout always made a dish; and to this dinner Hannah More was always invited.

great Roscius rode with a stew-pan of minced meat with him in the coach for my dinner. Percy is acted again this evening: do any of you choose to go? I can write you an order; for my own part, I shall enjoy a much superior pleasure—that of sitting by the fire, in a great chair, and being denied to all company; what is Percy to this?

Well, if you do not desire I should write you an order, I will write something that will give some pleasure to your sisterly vanity. A friend has just sent me a letter she received from Mrs. Clive, from which here follows an extract. 'I suppose you have heard of the uncommon success Miss More's play has met with, indeed, very deservedly. I have not seen it, but have read it: it is delightful, natural, and affecting, and by much the best modern tragedy that has been acted in my time, which you know is a pretty while ago. As you are acquainted with her family, I know you will be pleased with her success. Mr. Garrick had the conducting it, and you know whatever he touches turns to gold.'

My friends have been so excessively kind to me in my little illness, that it was worth suffering some pain, (though perhaps not quite so much) to try them. The Garricks have been to see me every morning. The other day he told me he was in a violent hurry—that he had been to order his own and Mrs. Garrick's mourning—had just settled every thing with the undertaker, and called for a moment to take a few hints for my epitaph. I told him he was too late, as I had disposed of the em-

ployment, a few days before, to Dr. Johnson: but as I thought *he* (Garrick) would praise me most, I should be glad to change; as to hints, I told him I had only one to give; which was to romance as much as he could, and make the character as fine as possible.

H. More to her sister.

London, 1778.

To-morrow I go to Hampton; I dread catching cold, as I have not ventured down stairs; the doctor violently opposes my going, as he has the most exalted opinion of my indiscretion. Mrs. Garrick and he battled an hour about the propriety of it. As he found we were both secretly resolved, he made a virtue of necessity, and gave the leave we were determined to take. He told us he expected I should be brought back half-dead with feasting, and indolence, and luxury, and imprudence; but at last he consented on condition that I should be well furred and flannelled, live maigre, and drink no wine.

We have been here a week; Mrs. Sheridan is with us, and her husband comes down on evenings. I find I have mistaken this lady; she is unaffected and sensible; converses and reads extremely well, and writes prettily. To be sure there may be wiser parties in the world than ours, but I question if there is one more cheerful. Ought one to own it, that the great English Roscius, and the best English dramatic poet, (to say nothing of the ladies,

who set up for something too)—that these great geniuses, I say, sit up till midnight, playing at cross-purposes, crooked answers, and what's my thought like? you never heard a set of wits utter half so much nonsense!

I dined to-day in the Adelphi: we were very comfortable. Garrick read a good deal, and would insist upon my reading a poem, which I told him I would not do to prevent a French war. Saturday Lady Juliana Penn spent the afternoon with me: I like her much; she bears her misfortunes, (the loss of the government of a vast province, and twenty thousand a year) with the constancy of a great mind.

I was last night in some fine company. One lady asked what was the newest colour; the other answered that the most truly fashionable silk was a soupçon de vert, lined with a *soupir etouffée et bradée de l'esperance;* now you must not consult your old-fashioned dictionary for the word *espérance,* for you will there find that it means nothing but hope, whereas espérance in the new language of the times means rose-buds. I dined the other day at Mrs. Leveson's, and spent the afternoon at Mrs. Boscawen's with the Duchess of Beaufort.

As you love to see all my nonsense, I enclose a few lines I sent to Mrs. Boscawen the other day, with a little bottle of otto of roses.

Too gross are my senses, too vulgar my nose is,
For perfume of jasmine or essence of roses;
To you 'tis more suited, whose organs, I find,
Partake the refinement that graces your mind.

Had the phial, dear Madam, I now send to you,
Been the phial which held the Diable Boiteux,
The spirit in prison no more would complain,
Nor solicit the scholar to free him again.

When laid on your toilet, and kept in your sight,
How mortals would envy the fate of the sprite,
Not a soul but would wish of his place to make trial,
And each beau would be cramming himself in a phial.

And why not in this? for deep chymists, 'tis said,
Can draw forth a spirit from feathers or lead—
Nay from butterflies too; and how do we know,
But this essence of scents is a liquified beau?

From Mrs. Boscawen to Mrs. More.

January 1, 1778.

I send you, dear Madam, the enclosed from Mr. Berenger to me.

'I return you the tragedy of Percy with as many thanks as I can give for the pleasure of being permitted to read it. I must not talk like a French critic or a reviewer, of plot, sentiment, language, character, and all that Bays talks about, but I will call it a meritorious and capital performance, in which there is none of the *feather*, but all the *point* and *force* of the pen. When you see the fair author, crown her, cover her, hide her with laurels: and when I see her I will scatter flowers before her.

Adieu, my dear Madam, adieu,

R. BERENGER.

I suppose Madam More will round off another *wonder of five acts* before she wets her lips in my

tea-cup; which at least, is as inspiring as the cold Castalian spring. Had she been here yesterday, she would have met 'the god of her idolatry'—Earl Percy—but as she would not come—'Earl Percy took his way.'

BERENGER.

From the honourable Mrs. Boscawen.

I wish you a happy new year, my dear Madam, a more glorious one you can hardly achieve, but glory is one thing and happiness is another. *Je vous souhaite toutes les deux pour bien des anneés.*

Here is Mr. Berenger's flowery wreath most complete, I think; when shall I carry you to put it on—shall it be Tuesday next? I have no day to offer you sooner.

Though always very much your's,

F. B.

Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

Hampton, March 5, 1778.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Any apology in the world that ingenuity could invent, I should blush to make to you, for my long and seemingly inexcusable silence; but I am sure that when you are convinced it has proceeded from no other cause than illness, you will both pity and forgive me. I have been laid up for a whole month with the most tedious and painful rheumatism in my face—a disorder quite new to me, and which

not only robs me of ease by day and sleep by night, but also makes reading and writing painful to me. I have kept my room for three weeks, and Dr. Cadogan has attended me every day. My good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, have brought me here for a week, to try the effect of this salutary air, whose benefit I have so often felt before; but perhaps the beneficial influences of agreeable company are sometimes mistaken for those of the air. As yet I am not better, and do not stir out of doors. If I were out of pain, nothing could be more to my taste than our manner of living here. The Sheridans are of our party, and contribute to embellish it.

I am very much pleased to find that *Percy* meets with your approbation. It has been extremely successful, far beyond my expectation, and more so than any *tragedy* has been for many years. The profits were not so great as they would have been, had it been brought out when the town was full; yet they were such as I have no reason to complain of. The author's nights, sale of the copy, &c. amounted to near six hundred pounds, (this is *entre nous*); and as my friend, Mr. Garrick, has been so good as to lay it out for me on the best security, and at five per cent., it makes a decent little addition to my small income. Cadell gave £150.—a very handsome price, with conditional promises. He confesses (a thing not usual) that it has had a very great sale, and that he shall get a good deal of money by it. The first impression was near four thousand, and the second is almost sold. I do not

wish to rise on any body's fall; but it has happened rather luckily for Percy, that so many unsuccessful tragedies were brought out this winter.

I thank you for the desire you express to see me at Paris. I must not indulge such a wish. I shall be most happy to see you, but I believe it must be on English ground. Mr. Gwatkin (with whom I went to see Percy) told me your desire to possess so worthless a thing as my picture. Nothing but your great partiality for me could make you think it worth having. Be that as it will, I shall most readily obey you by sitting to Gardiner before I leave town, if my health will give me leave, for I should be sorry you saw my resemblance at present, so muffled and frightful as I am. I did propose leaving town the last week in February, but this illness has been a sad baulk to me, as I had, unluckily, a most desirable engagement for every day, not one of which I could accept.

Adieu, my dear Madam. Believe me truly your very obliged and faithful

H. More.

To the same.

August 9, 1778.

My dear Madam,

I received your favour on Saturday, and though I could not but be infinitely *concerned* at the melancholy cause of your sudden departure, yet I cannot say I was the least *surprised* at it, as it is easy to imagine what effects the dangerous state

of a deservedly beloved child must have on a heart so exquisitely alive to all the maternal feelings. What a journey of hurry, anxiety, and fatigue, you must have had! I hope you did not undertake it alone. I am very impatient to learn how you found Master Gwatkin, and what his medical friends think of him. I rejoice that he is in such good hands; if there is efficacy in human art, I doubt not of his recovery, having been myself so many times snatched from the devouring jaws of death by the friendly assistance he now receives. God grant it may be as beneficial to him!

I wrote to you, Madam, last Friday, not knowing of your migration. I hope they will not send you the letter, as it is of no consequence now, containing only the particulars relative to my dear little friend, of which you have now so much better information. When your letter was brought, I was upon a visit in the neighbourhood, where it was sent me. There were ten ladies and a clergyman. I was pleased with the assemblage, thinking the vanity of the *sex* would meet with its equilibrium in the wisdom of the *profession*;—that the brilliant sallies of female wit and sprightliness would be corrected and moderated by the learned gravity and judicious conversation of the Rev. Theologue. I looked upon the latter as the centripetal, acting against the centrifugal force of the former, who would be kept within their orbit of decorum by his means. For about an hour nothing was uttered but *words*, which are almost an equivalent to nothing. The gentleman had not yet spoken. The *ladies*,

with loud vociferations, seemed to *talk* much without *thinking* at all. The gentleman, with all the male stupidity of silent recollection, without saying a single syllable, seemed to be acting over the pantomime of thought. I cannot say, indeed, that his countenance so much belied his understanding, as to express any thing: no! let me not do him that injustice; he might have sat for the picture of insensibility. I endured his taciturnity, thinking that the longer he was in collecting, adjusting, and arranging his ideas, the more would he charm me with the tide of his eloquence, when the materials of his conversation were ready for display: but, alas! it never occurred that I have seen an *empty* bottle corked as well as a *full* one. After sitting another hour, I thought I perceived in him signs of pregnant sentiment, which was just on the point of being delivered in speech. I was extremely exhilarated at this, but it was a false alarm; he essayed it not. At length the imprisoned powers of rhetoric burst through the shallow mounds of torpid silence and reserve, and he remarked, with equal acuteness of wit, novelty of invention, and depth of penetration, that—'we had had no summer.' Then, shocked at his own loquacity, he double-locked the door of his lips, '*and word spoke never more.*'

Will you not say I am turning devotee when I tell you what my amusements, of the reading kind, are. I have read through all the epistles three times since I have been here; the ordinary translation, Locke's Paraphrase, and a third put into

very elegant English (I know not by whom), in which St. Paul's obscurities are elucidated, and Harwood's pomp of words avoided. I am also reading 'West on the Resurrection;' in my poor judgment a most excellent thing, calculated to confound all the cavils of the infidel, and to confirm all the hopes of the believer. Have you heard from the sweet little Cornwallian since you left her? My most affectionate regards to my dear Master Lovell, and earnest wishes for his speedy recovery.

I am, my dear Madam,
With the most perfect esteem,
Your ever obliged and affectionate
humble servant,

H. More.

We find the following verses enclosed in one of the letters to Mrs. Gwatkin.

AN IMITATION FROM THE SPANISH.

Thrice happy he, whose lowly lot
Is fixed in his paternal cot,
Remote from strife and state;
Content he cultivates the glade,
Inhales the breeze, enjoys the shade,
And loves his humble fate.

His eyes no anxious vigils keep;
No dreams of gold distract his sleep,
And lead his heart astray;
Nor blasting envy's tainted gale
Pollutes the pleasures of the vale,
To vex his harmless day.

The tower that rears its front on high,
And bids defiance to the sky,
  Provokes the angry winds;
The branching oak, extending wide,
Invites destruction by its pride,
  And courts the fall it finds.

Nor lightning's blast nor wind destroys
The safer bliss, the humbler joys,
  That crown my peaceful cot;
There hallowed quietude resorts,
And wonders men can covet courts,
  And bids me bless my lot.

Ah! sacred leisure—guest divine!
Thy meek delights be ever mine,
  Fair, permanent, and pure;
Chaste Nymph, who taught my erring youth
This dear, this necessary truth,
  'Be humble and secure.'

From H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1778.

I dined with the Garricks on Thursday; he went with me afterwards, intending only to set me down at Sir Joshua's, where I was engaged to pass the evening. I was not a little proud to be the means of bringing such a beau into such a party. We found Gibbon, Johnson, Hermes Harris, Burney, Chambers, Ramsey, the Bishop of St. Asaph, Boswell, Langton, &c.; and scarce an expletive man or woman among them. Garrick put Johnson into such good spirits that I never knew him so entertaining or more instructive. He was as brilliant as himself, and as good-humoured as any one else.

Yesterday I dined with Captain and Mrs. Middleton, and Mrs. Bouverie;—good Jonas Hanway and the Bishop of Chester[1] and his lady were of the party. I had only been in company with the Bishop once before, and that was two years ago. I left them earlier than I wished, though not till near nine, being engaged to spend the evening at the Burrows', to meet Lady Juliana Penn and Dr. Price.

We have been high in debate to-night, which kept us up beyond our usual sober hour. Sheridan had dared to censure Shakspeare,—I have raved and scolded,—and Garrick did every thing but beat him.

Hannah More returned to Bristol in April, 1778, after another five months' absence; and immediately on the death of Mr. Garrick, which happened on the 20th of January, 1779, she again set out for London, at the earnest desire of Mrs. Garrick, whose melancholy summons she rose from the bed of sickness to attend.

Adelphi, Jan. 1779.

From Dr. Cadogan's, I intended to have gone to the Adelphi, but found that Mrs. Garrick was that moment quitting her house, while preparations were making for the last sad ceremony; she very wisely fixed on a private friend's house for this purpose, where she could be at her ease. I got there just before her; she was prepared for meeting me; she ran into my arms, and we both remained silent for

[1] Dr. Porteus, afterwards Bishop of London.

some minutes; at last she whispered, 'I have this moment embraced his coffin, and you come next.' She soon recovered herself, and said with great composure, 'The goodness of God to me is inexpressible; I desired to die, but it is his will that I should live, and he has convinced me he will not let my life be quite miserable; for he gives astonishing strength to my body, and grace to my heart; neither do I deserve, but I am thankful for both.' She thanked me a thousand times for such a real act of friendship, and bade me be comforted, for it was God's will. She told me they had just returned from Althorp, Lord Spencer's, where he had been reluctantly dragged, for he had felt unwell for some time; but during his visit he was often in such fine spirits that they could not believe he was ill. On his return home he appointed Dr. Cadogan to meet him, who ordered him an emetic, the warm bath, and the usual remedies, but with very little effect. On the Sunday he was in good spirits and free from pain; but as the suppression still continued, Dr. Cadogan became extremely alarmed, and sent for Pott, Heberden, and Schomberg, who gave him up the moment they saw him. Poor Garrick stared to see his room full of doctors, not being conscious of his real state. No change happened till the Tuesday evening, when the surgeon who was sent for to blister and bleed him, made light of his illness, assuring Mrs. Garrick that he would be well in a day or two, and insisted on her going to lie down. Towards morning she desired to be called if there was the least

change. Every time that she administered the draughts to him in the night, he always squeezed her hand in a particular manner, and spoke to her with the greatest tenderness and affection. Immediately after he had taken his last medicine, he softly said, 'Oh! dear,' and yielded up his spirit without a groan, and in his perfect senses. His behaviour during the night was all gentleness and patience, and he frequently made apologies to those about him, for the trouble he gave them.

On opening him, a stone was found that measured five inches and a half round one way, and four and a half the other, yet this was not the immediate cause of his death; his kidneys were quite gone. I paid a melancholy visit to his coffin yesterday, where I found room for meditation, till the mind 'burst with thinking.' His new house is not so pleasant as Hampton, nor so splendid as the Adelphi, but it is commodious enough for all the wants of its inhabitant; and besides, it is so quiet, that he never will be disturbed till the eternal morning; and never till then will a sweeter voice than his own be heard. May he then find mercy! They are preparing to hang the house with black, for he is to lie in state till Monday. I dislike this pageantry, and cannot help thinking that the disembodied spirit must look with contempt upon the farce that is played over its miserable relics. But a splendid funeral could not be avoided, as he is to be laid in the Abbey with such illustrious dust, and so many are desirous of testifying their respect by attending.

I can never cease to remember with affection and gratitude, so warm, steady, and disinterested a friend; and I can most truly bear this testimony to his memory, that I never witnessed, in any family, more decorum, propriety, and regularity than in his: where I never saw a card, or ever met, (except in one instance) a person of his own profession at his table: of which Mrs. Garrick, by her elegance of taste, her correctness of manners, and very original turn of humour, was the brightest ornament. All his pursuits and tastes were so decidedly intellectual, that it made the society and the conversation which was always to be found in his circle, both interesting and delightful.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Hill Street, Friday Morning.

DEAR MADAM,

There never was a time in which dear Mrs. Garrick's kind attention would not have made its impression, but at this time it touches my heart in a degree not possible to be expressed. My bodily illness has been slight; but for her loss, my loss, yours, the world's, my mind has been sick indeed. Talents like Mr. Garrick's must ever excite the admiration of mankind; but accompanied by so many virtues, adorned by so many graces, they are so endeared to one's affections, so engrafted in one's esteem, that the loss can never be repaired, never be forgotten. Some consolation, however, arises from those excellences which render our loss

irreparable. His untainted morals in a situation exposed to temptation; his perfect rectitude of conduct through the whole course of his life; his amiable and kind domestic behaviour; his generosity and fidelity to his relations; and his charity to the poor and distressed, will ever be remembered by the age in which he lived, and recorded to ages to come. For some days after the sad event, I contemplated only the great parts of his character, and my sorrow was deep; but I hoped time would, in some degree, familiarize my mind with it; but, alas! so many little graces, so many pleasing qualities every moment present themselves to my recollection, that the grief is still new.

I heard with great satisfaction of the resignation with which dear Mrs. Garrick behaved, and doubt not but she will be supported by that great Being to whose will she submits. Never did I behold so happy a pair. I have ever admired the dignity of mind which Mrs. Garrick possessed on all occasions, and I can hardly say whether I love or esteem her most. Her patience in such deep affliction will have its reward somewhere, and at some time; but I will confess to you I live in terrors about her health. If a sympathizing heart can give her any comfort, that comfort I can bring whenever she will admit me. I can grieve with her, and hourly do I grieve for her.

I am, dear Madam, with great esteem,

Your most obedient humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

MEMOIRS.

PART II.

FROM A. D. 1779 TO A. D. 1785.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

THE death of Mr. Garrick may be considered an æra in the life of Hannah More. His gaiety, his intelligence, and his wit, added to his admiration of her genius, and the warmth of his personal friendship for her, while in the opinion of all mankind his favour was a great privilege and distinction, formed the strongest spell that held her in subjection to the fascinations of brilliant company and a town-life, in opposition to those inbred and original propensities which disposed her strongly, in the midst of these blandishments, to cultivate in retirement a better acquaintance with herself, and a better use of her great capacities. She was not a person, however, to be actuated by sudden and over-powering impulses, or to be hurried into any adoption, especially one which implied a change

of principle and habit, without much consideration both of the end and the means. From the death of Garrick to her retreat to Cowslip Green, an interval of about five years, she gradually proceeded in redeeming her time, and detaching herself from engagements, which, however agreeable to her taste and talents, kept her from answering the higher vocation which summoned her to the service of the soul and to labours of love.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, Feb. 2, 1779.

We (Miss Cadogan and myself,) went to Charing Cross to see the melancholy procession. Just as we got there we received a ticket from the Bishop of Rochester, to admit us into the Abbey. No admittance could be obtained but under his hand. We hurried away in a hackney coach, dreading to be too late. The bell of St. Martin's and the Abbey gave a sound that smote upon my very soul. When we got to the cloisters, we found multitudes striving for admittance. We gave our ticket, and were let in, but unluckily we ought to have kept it. We followed the man who unlocked a door of iron, and directly closed it upon us, and two or three others, and we found ourselves in a tower, with a dark winding staircase, consisting of half a hundred stone steps. When we got to the top there was no way out; we ran down again, called, and beat the door till the whole pile resounded with our cries. Here we staid half an hour in

perfect agony.; we were sure it would be all over: nay, we might never be let out; we might starve; we might perish. At length our clamours brought an honest man,—a guardian angel I then thought him. We implored him to take care of us, and get us into a part of the abbey whence we might see the grave. He asked for the Bishop's ticket; we had given it away to the wrong person; and he was not obliged to believe we ever had one; yet he saw so much truth in our grief, that though we were most shabby, and a hundred fine people were soliciting the same favour, he took us under each arm—carried us safely through the crowd, and put us in a little gallery directly over the grave, where we could see and hear everything as distinctly as if the Abbey had been a parlour. Little things sometimes affect the mind strongly! We were no sooner recovered from the fresh burst of grief than I cast my eyes, the first thing, on Handel's monument and read the scroll in his hand, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Just at three the great doors burst open with a noise that shook the roof: the organ struck up, and the whole choir in strains only less solemn than the "archangel's trump," began Handel's fine anthem. The whole choir advanced to the grave, in hoods and surplices, singing all the way: then Sheridan, as chief-mourner; then the body, (alas! whose body!) with ten noblemen and gentlemen, pall-bearers; then the rest of the friends and mourners; hardly a dry eye,—the very players, bred to the trade of counterfeiting, shed genuine tears.

As soon as the body was let down, the bishop began the service, which he read in a low, but solemn and devout manner. Such an awful stillness reigned, that every word was audible. How I felt it! Judge if my heart did not assent to the wish, that the soul of our dear brother now departed was in peace. And this is all of Garrick! Yet a very little while, and he shall "say to the worm, Thou art my brother; and to corruption, thou art my mother and my sister." So passes away the fashion of this world. And the very night he was buried, the playhouses were as full, and the Pantheon was as crowded, as if no such thing had happened: nay, the very mourners of the day partook of the revelries of the night,—the same night too!

As soon as the crowd was dispersed, our friend came to us with an invitation from the bishop's lady, to whom he had related our disaster, to come into the deanery. We were carried into her dressing room, but being incapable of speech, she very kindly said she would not interrupt such sorrow, and left us; but sent up wine, cakes, and all manner of good things, which was really well-timed. I caught no cold, notwithstanding all I went through.

On Wednesday night we came to the Adelphi,—to this house! She bore it with great tranquillity; but what was my surprise to see her go alone into the chamber and bed, in which he had died that day fortnight. She had a delight in it beyond expression. I asked her the next day how she went through it? She told me very well: that she first

prayed with great composure, then went and kissed the dear bed, and got into it with a sad pleasure.

Hampton, February, 1779.

We have been at this sweet, and once cheerful, place near a week. Alas! it has lost its perfume, yet it is in great beauty; the weather is fine, the verdure charming; 'and could we pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,' all would appear as beautiful as it used to do.

A few very intimate friends came with us. Our first entrance was sad enough. Dragon looked as he used to do, and ran up to meet his master. Poor Mrs. Garrick went and shut herself up for half an hour. Not a sigh escapes our poor friend that she can restrain. When I expressed my surprise at her self-command, she answered, 'Groans and complaints are very well for those who are to mourn but a little while; but a sorrow that is to last for life, will not be violent and romantic.'

We shall go to town to-morrow, when she insists on it that I shall go and see my friends.

From the same to the same.

London, 1779.

I have been to Mrs. Boscawen's, where I was a little amused by spending an hour with Lord Howe, lately returned from America. He is agreeable, and remarkably modest in speaking of himself. He said, It was a little hard, that after a man had devoted his whole time and talents (however poor

the latter might be,) to the service of his country, that the *event*, and not his conduct, should determine his character; that to be *unsuccessful* and *guilty* should be the same thing, and that he should be held up as a public criminal, for not doing what could not be done!

Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Vesey have spent one afternoon with us; and these, with Ladies Bathurst, Edgecombe, and Spencer, are all we have seen. She is refused to every body, but she is so circumstanced as to be much solicited on that score, for I suppose Garrick had more, what we may call particular friends, than any man in England.

My way of life is very different from what it used to be; you must not, therefore, expect much entertainment from my letters, for, as in the annals of states, so in the lives of individuals, those periods are often the safest and best which make the poorest figure. After breakfast, I go to my own apartment for several hours, where I read, write, and work; very seldom letting anybody in, though I have a room for separate visitors; but I almost look on a morning visit as an immorality. At four we dine. We have the same elegant table as usual, but I generally confine myself to one single dish of meat. I have taken to drink half a glass of wine. At six we have coffee; at eight tea, when we have, sometimes, a dowager or two of quality. At ten we have sallad and fruits. Each has her book, which we read without any restraint, as if we were alone, without apologies or speech-making.

London, 1779.

Mrs. Montagu said a very sensible thing to me the other day; we were speaking of a friend of ours, who, with great sense, gives way to great violence of temper. 'The ancient heathens,' said she, 'taught men to subdue the passions from a principle of wisdom; the Christian religion teaches it from a principle of duty; but it is no wonder that the modern fine gentlemen should be the slaves of passion, for they are neither wise heathens nor good Christians.' I was asked yesterday to meet Dr. Burney and Evelina at Mrs. Reynolds',[1] but was engaged at home. This Evelina is an extraordinary girl; she is not more than twenty; of a very retired disposition; and how she picked up her knowledge of nature and low life, her *Brangtons*, and her *St. Giles's* gentry, is astonishing!

Lady Bathurst and I are very friendly. Apsley House is finished, and most superbly furnished; and, which is not always the case with superb things, it is very beautiful, and teeming with patriotism, for all her glasses, hangings, and ornaments are entirely English.

Pleasure is by much the most laborious trade I know, especially for those who have not a vocation to it. I worked with great assiduity at this hard calling on Monday. The moment I had breakfasted, I went to Apsley House: there I staid till near two:

[1] Sir Joshua's sister, who, to avoid the fatigue of so much company as frequented her brother's, had retired about this time to a small house of her own.

I then made insignificant visits till four, when I went to Audley Street[1] to dinner, where I staid till eight, and from thence went to spend the evening at Mrs. Vesey's, where there was a small assembly of about thirty people, and all clever. She keeps out dunces, because she never has cards. Mrs. Montagu and the provost of Dublin talked *most* and *best*. I was asked to meet another party the same evening, but not being able to make a polypus of myself, I did not go. And yet I had rather slave at it all day now and then, than make a single little dull formal visit every afternoon.

Encouraged by the great success of Percy, and constantly urged by Mr. Garrick to try her power once more in the same way, Hannah More had amused herself during the former year in writing another tragedy, four acts of which had been read and much approved of by him. She had completed this piece sometime before his death, and now brought it with her, intending to leave it in the manager's hands during the summer, that it might appear with proper advantages the following season. Mr. Harris, however, no sooner understood that the play was in readiness, than he solicited her with so much earnestness to let him bring it out the very next month, that she yielded to his persuasions, against the better judgment of herself and friends, and suffered it to appear at an unfavourable season.

Notwithstanding the disadvantages arising from

[1] Mrs. Boscawen's.

the extreme lateness of the season, and the absence of many of the first actors, Fatal Falsehood, though it was very far from having such a run as Percy, was received with very great applause; in corroboration of which, we will insert two or three extracts from the letters of one of her sisters, who was in town nursing her during a severe illness, to another sister at Bristol.

Adelphi.

If the weather should be very warm, Fatal Falsehood is to be played only three or four nights. Hannah seems mighty indifferent about the matter.

Adelphi, 1779.

Just returned from the house; the applause was as great as her most sanguine friends could wish. Miss Young was interrupted three different times, in the speech on false honour, with bursts of approbation. When Rivers, who was thought dead, appeared in the fifth act, they quite shouted for joy. The curtain fell to slow music,—and now for the moment when the fate of the piece was to be decided! The audience did her the honour to testify their approbation by the warmest applause that could possibly be given; for when Hull came forward to ask their permission to perform it again, they did give leave by three loud shouts, and by many huzzaings. I will tell you a little anecdote. A lady observing to one of her maid-servants, when she came in from the play, that her eyes

looked red, as if she had been crying, the girl, by way of apology, said, Well, ma'am, if I did, it was no harm; a great many respectable people cried too. Percy, I hear, is translated into German, and has been performed at Vienna with great success.

Mrs. Reynolds to Miss H. More.

1779.

I congratulate *you*, myself, and all my sex on the happy and most beautiful exhibition of your play last night. Nothing should have prevented me from testifying my joy in person, but the apprehension that you might be much engaged this morning. I would wish to come when I could freely describe the sensations I felt—at least endeavour to describe them. Miss Young's recollection that Julia was absent, &c. was a beautiful and striking incident. My eyes are so weak I can scarcely see to write.

Ever affectionately yours,

H. REYNOLDS.

Miss H. More returned to Bristol in June, and, in the December of the same year (1779) we find her again at Mrs. Garrick's, with whom she spent many subsequent winters at Hampton in quiet seclusion, gratifying her avidity for knowledge, by enlarging her acquaintance with the best authors.

From H. More to her sister.

Hampton, 1780.

Mrs. Garrick and I read to ourselves sans intermission. Mr. Matthew Henry and Mr. David Hume (two gentlemen of very different ways of thinking on some certain points,) at present engage a great part of my time. I have almost finished the sixth volume, and am at this moment qualified to dispute with the Dean of Gloucester on tonnage and poundage, monopolies, and ship-money.

Hampton, Jan. 1780.

Here we are still, and as little acquainted with what passes in the world as though we were five hundred, instead of fifteen miles out of it. Poor Mrs. Garrick is a greater recluse than ever, and has quite a horror at the thought of mixing in the world again. I fancy, indeed, she will never go much into it. Her garden and her family amuse her; but the idea of company is death to her. We never see a human face but each other's. Though in such deep retirement, I am never dull, because I am not reduced to the fatigue of entertaining dunces, or of being obliged to listen to *them*. We dress like a couple of Scaramouches, dispute like a couple of Jesuits, eat like a couple of aldermen, walk like a couple of porters, and read as much as any two doctors of either university.

I wish the fatal 20th was well over: I dread the anniversary of that day. On her wedding-day she

went to the abbey, where she staid a good while: and she said she had been to spend the morning on her husband's grave; where, for the future, she should always pass her wedding days. Yet she seems cheerful, and never indulges the least melancholy in company. She spends so very few hours in her bed, that I cannot imagine how she can be so well: but her very great activity, both of body and mind has, humanly speaking, preserved her life.

Mrs. Boscawen has made a little party which she thought I should like: for you must know there are no assemblies or great parties till after Christmas, and till then it is not the fashion to wear jewels, or dress at all. This last custom has, I think, good sense and economy in it, as it cuts off a couple of months from the season of extravagance: but I fancy it redeems but little from the nights, for one may lose a good deal of money in a very bad gown.

London, 1780.

I spent a very comfortable day yesterday with Miss Reynolds: only Dr. Johnson, and Mrs. Williams and myself. He is in but poor health, but his mind has lost nothing of its vigour. He never opens his mouth but one learns something: one is sure either of hearing a new idea, or an old one expressed in an original manner. We did not part till eleven. He scolded me heartily as usual, when I differed from him in opinion, and, as usual, laughed when I flattered him. I was very bold in combating some of his darling prejudices: nay, I

ventured to defend one or two of the Puritans, whom I forced him to allow to be good men, and good writers. He said he was not angry with me at all for liking Baxter. He liked him himself; 'but then,' said he, 'Baxter was bred up in the establishment, and would have died in it, if he could have got the living of Kidderminster. He was a very good man.' Here he was wrong; for Baxter was offered a bishopric after the restoration.

I never saw Johnson really angry with me but once; and his displeasure did him so much honour that I loved him the better for it. I alluded rather flippantly, I fear, to some witty passage in 'Tom Jones:' he replied, 'I am shocked to hear you quote from so vicious a book. I am sorry to find you have read it: a confession which no modest lady should ever make. I scarcely know a more corrupt work.' I thanked him for his correction; assured him I thought full as ill of it now as he did, and had only read it at an age when I was more subject to be caught by the wit, than able to discern the mischief. Of Joseph Andrews I declared my decided abhorrence. He went so far as to refuse to Fielding the great talents which are ascribed to him, and broke out into a noble panegyric on his competitor, Richardson; who, he said, was as superior to him in talents as in virtue; and whom he pronounced to be the greatest genius that had shed its lustre on this path of literature.

Hampton, 1780.

I have been spending a week with my good friends

the Diceys: they have an admirable house, and as far as I can judge of the grounds, in their present winter dress, they are exceedingly pretty. The Duke of Bridgewater has a seat in the parish. We lived very placidly. The good parson read to us every evening. Mr. Dicey lives like a prince. I never saw any establishment more consistently liberal and handsome throughout. Mr. D. saw me safe home, and loaded me with apples, cream, cheeses, &c.; and, not being able to procure any game, I really thought they would have made me bring away some of their clothes and furniture. As Mrs. Garrick's year is out, we have been very busy sending round her cards of thanks. I suppose they include seven hundred people; six hundred of whom I dare say she will hardly ever let in again.

We pack off on Tuesday, for *good*, as they say, all except Liddy. We regret leaving a new cow and a young calf. The birds that we feed three times a day at the window are to be left on board wages; a small loaf being to be brought them every morning. I think I have told you a great deal of news.

Your letters are as full of deaths as the weekly bills of mortality; or, as an honest man who dined here the other day called them, the 'bills of morality.' Who would have thought *they* had been *London bills.*

Adelphi, 1780.

The other evening they carried me to Mrs. Ord's assembly; I was quite dressed for the purpose.

Mrs. Garrick gave me an elegant cap, and put it on herself; so that I was quite sure of being smart: but how short-lived is all human joy! and see what it is to live in the country! When I came into the drawing-rooms, I found them full of company, every human creature in deep mourning, and I, poor I, all gorgeous in scarlet. I never recollected that the mourning for some foreign Wilhelmina Jacquelina was not over. However, I got over it as well as I could, made an apology, lamented the *ignorance* in which I had lately lived, and I hope this false step of mine will be buried in oblivion. There was all the old set, the Johnsons, the Burneys, the Chapones, the Thrales, the Smelts, the Pepyses, the Ramsays, and so on ad infinitum. Even Jacobite Johnson was in deep mourning. Mrs. Thrale, with whom I was not acquainted, though we have sometimes met, paid me particular attention, and desires that we may visit. I wish myself at Hampton already. The brightest circles do not amuse me, and they are got at with so much trouble and expense, and loss of time in dressing, that such considerations would outweigh all the pleasure, if it were even much greater than it is; and yet nothing could be more rational: no cards; most of the company were either wits or worthy people.

Mrs. —— the other day entertained us with all the old routine of abusing managers, and lamenting the hardships of authors. This, I suppose, has been the burden of every writer of play, farce, or interlude since the days of the stroller Thespis. For my part, I have made it a rule never to abuse either

bookseller or manager, and therefore have gone on smoothly with them all. These complaints proceed chiefly from ignorance or unfairness; people expect more virtues from others, than they themselves would be capable of exerting in the same situation. There are people in the world who think I have more cause of complaint than Mrs. ——; *she* raved, *I* said not a word: to complain and resent is very easy: but it is my defect to value myself on being above it: they are passionate, I am proud; that is the true difference; if they will tolerate my vice, I ought to endure their weakness; and so we may rub on well enough for the short time we shall last. That silly creature C—— has written a book which is foolish and offensive beyond expression. She represents her heroine when she got up in the morning to have had 'rose-coloured thoughts.' Did you ever see any?

London, 1780.

Cadell and I are going to prepare the second edition of 'Fatal Falsehood.' We talked over all my affairs. He gave me some very good advice, but says I am too good a Christian for an author. Poor Dr. Schomberg is dead; Beauclerck is dying; what terrible depredations have been made in that society in a very little time. The doctor had a great deal of polite learning, knew the world, and was agreeable; but he was the rankest infidel I ever knew: his company was much sought after, but I always dreaded it, as he took pleasure in introducing the particular subject which he knew

would shock me. He thought me a poor, prejudiced, well-meaning bigot.

I expect the coach to take me to Mrs. Delany's, where I am going to visit for Mrs. Garrick, and for myself. I have sometimes the privilege of being present at her select parties, never exceeding eight, which are elsewhere unequalled. The venerable hostess herself, the friend and correspondent of Dean Swift; the Duchess Dowager of Portland, heiress to the great Earl of Oxford; my friend Horace Walpole, son to the minister of that name; the Countess of Bute, wife to the late first minister, and daughter (but of a very superior character) to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; Dowager lady Leicester; Lady Wallingford, daughter of the famous Mississippi Law; and Mrs. Boscawen. They are all advanced in life and in knowledge, and it is a great honour for such a young nobody as I am to be admitted. I forgot to say, that here, too, I met Mrs. Dashwood, celebrated as the Delia of Hammond, in his beautiful elegies, written more than any thing I have met with, in the spirit of his master, the tender Tibullus.

We had the finest party imaginable at Mrs. Boscawen's on Friday. There was all the *elite* of London, both for talents and fashion. I got into a lucky corner. Mrs. Carter and I, who had not met before this winter, fastened on each other, and agreed not to part for the evening. We got Soame Jenyns, Mr. Pepys, and Mr. Cole, into our little circle, and were very sprightly. It was to have been entirely a talking party, but our hostess very

wisely put two card-tables in the outer drawing-room, which weeded the company of some of the great, and all the dull, to the no small accommodation of the rest.

London, 1780.

My being obliged to walk so much, makes me lose seeing my friends who call on me; and what is worse, it makes me lose my time, which will never call on me again. Yesterday I spent a very agreeable day in the country. The Bishop of St. Asaph and his family invited me to come to Wimbledon Park, Lord Spencer's charming villa, which he always lends to the bishop at this time of the year. I did not think there could have been so beautiful a place within seven miles of London. The park has as much variety of ground, and is as *unLondonish* as if it were an hundred miles off; and I enjoyed the violets, and the birds, more than all the marechal powder and the music of this foolish town. There was a good deal of company at dinner; but we were quite at our ease, and strolled about, or sat in the library just as we liked. This last amused me much, for it was the Duchess of Marlborough's (old Sarah), and numbers of the books were presents to her from all the great authors of her time, whose names she had carefully written in the blank leaves, for I believe she had the pride of being thought learned, as well as rich and beautiful. I drank tea one day last week with our bishop (Newton), whom I never thought to see again on this side heaven. He has gone through

enough to kill half the stout young men, and seems to be patched up again for a few months. They are superabundantly kind to me.

The gentlemen of the Museum came on Saturday to fetch poor Mr. Garrick's legacy of the old plays and curious black-letter books. Though they were not things to be read, and are only valuable to antiquaries for their age and scarcity, yet I could not see them carried off without a pang.

I was, the other night, at Mrs. Ord's. Every body was there, and in such a crowd I thought myself well off to be wedged in with Mr. Smelt, Langton, Ramsay, and Johnson. Johnson told me he had been with the king that morning, who enjoined him to add Spencer to his Lives of the Poets. I seconded the motion; he promised to think of it, but said the booksellers had not included him in their list of the poets.

I dined at Mrs. Boscawen's the other day very pleasantly, for Berenger was there, and was all himself, all chivalry, and blank verse, and anecdote. He told me some curious stories of Pope, with whom he used to spend the summer at his uncle's, Lord Cobham, of whom Pope asserts, you know, that he would feel the 'ruling passion strong in death,' and that 'save my country, heaven,' would be his last words. But what shows that Pope was not so good a prophet as a poet (though the ancients sometimes express both by the same word,) was, that in his last moments, not being able to carry a glass of jelly to his mouth, he was in such a passion, feeling his own weakness, that he threw

jelly, glass and all, into Lady Chatham's face, and expired!

Instead of going to Audley Street, where I was invited, I went to Mrs. Reynolds', and sat for my picture. Just as she began to paint, in came Dr. Johnson, who staid the whole time, and said good things by way of making me look well. I did not forget to ask him for a page for your memorandum book,[1] and he promised to write, but said you ought to be contented with a quotation; this, however, I told him you would not accept.

Hampton, 1780.

Hampton is very clean, very green, very beautiful, and very melancholy; but the 'long drear calm of fixed repose' suits me mightily after the hurry of London. We have been on the wing every day this week. Our way is to walk out four or five miles, to some of the prettiest villages, or prospects, and when we are quite tired, we get into the coach, which is waiting for us with our books, and we come home to dinner as hungry as Dragon himself. I took an airing by myself one morning to Hounslow, and paid a visit to the Sheridans at their country-house, where I had a very agreeable hour or two.

Miss More soon after this letter, (which was written in the spring of 1780,) paid a visit of a few days at Dr. Kennicott's, at Oxford, where

[1] A collection of autographs of eminent persons which her sister was making at that time.

she was introduced to the society of many persons valuable for their piety and learning, among the foremost of whom we may rank Dr. Horne,[1] then president of Magdalen college, and afterwards bishop of Norwich, and with this excellent man she preserved an uninterrupted friendship till his death. From Oxford she proceeded to Bristol, where she remained till the 16th of December, 1780.

From H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bristol, May 13, 1780.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I received a few days ago a most valuable treasure, Mr. Mason's Life of Gray, with the works of the latter. As there was not the least shadow of appearance from whom it came, perhaps you will conclude I was very busy in conjecturing. No such thing, my dear Madam, the action brought its explanation along with it, and I was not a moment in determining that so elegant and flattering a present could only be sent me by the friend I have now the honour of addressing. This idea had so fully impressed itself upon my mind, that I should have troubled you with my thanks for it, even if I had not had the honour of receiving the most obliging letter in the world two days after, which convinced me I was not mistaken.

1 It was to the daughter of the Bishop that she afterwards addressed the 'Heroic Epistle to Sally Horne,' in the blank leaves of 'Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales,' which she presented to the child, then three years old.

I staid rather longer with my friend at Hampton than I intended: one has always so many last words to say. The Sheridans were of our party for a few days; need I say they embellished it? Your friend, Mr. Cambridge, spent one morning with us, and did me the favour of repeating to me some parodies, for which I think he has a peculiar talent; one in particular highly pleased me, it is a passage from Lucan, in which he introduces Wilkes instead of Cæsar. Do you remember to have seen it?

How do you like the Wreath of Fashion, by Tickell (grandson of Addison's Tickell)? I hope you have seen it, and like it. I was much entertained with it, if I may say so of a thing which glances a little satirically at some of my acquaintance. The satire, however, is well-mannered and decent, and not of that immoral and flagitious kind which has lately been so much written and encouraged. In my humble opinion, he bids fair to become one of the best of our modern bards. If he have any fault, I think it is the want of plan and perspicuity, but he is very young, and will write still better. I suppose you have read Mr. Warton's second volume; I have not seen it, but hear that he totally rejects the authenticity of Rowley's Poems; so does Johnson, so does Percy, so do most of the antiquaries; but neither their authority nor their reasonings have yet entirely convinced your obstinate friend.[1]

I enclose for your *correction* (remember that,

[1] She was convinced afterwards.

dear Madam) an epitaph I was prevailed upon to write for a very worthy lady of this neighbourhood. She was a pattern of piety and goodness. As I know no species of composition in which one has less chance of succeeding, I would gladly have been excused, but could not. Among many other faults, it has one which is very material, and yet it seems almost to have the apology of necessity. All good critics, you know, have agreed that the introduction of the person's name is indispensable in all sepulchral inscriptions; and I am so well convinced of the justness of this remark, that I think an epitaph without a name belongs to nobody: but here is my difficulty, this good lady had two names, so peculiarly unlucky, and so obnoxious to puns, Fortune Little, that I would defy any poet, from Chaucer to Cumberland, to introduce either of them with the least degree of gravity or dignity. I have not yet sent it to the sculptor, who is polishing a very fine tablet of marble for me to spoil.

Have you had any of your charming *parties choisies* lately—all daffodil, all rose, all jonquil, as Madame de Sevigné says?

I have scarcely left myself room to say how much I am, my dear Madam,

Your ever obliged and faithful,

H. More.

To the same.

Bristol, August 3, 1780.

MY DEAR MADAM,

You do not forbid me to write to you; I therefore venture to do it without apology, and, albeit I am but little worthy of the honour, I am sensible, truly sensible of the happiness. Every letter I joyfully catch hold of, as a full and reasonable pretence to trouble you *de nouveau* with my nonsense. I think I once ventured to assert, and I believe you did not contradict it, that places made a considerable change in opinions, and that a composition or a companion which we should think insupportable in town, will do very passably in the country. In consequence of this doctrine, I venture to send you a copy of a paltry ode; though, in allowing for the operation of local circumstances on the mind, I am well aware I ought to have made the same exception in favour of Glanvilla, which you once did in behalf of Hampton. If the enclosed stanzas do not prove my wit (and I think it is pretty clear that they will not), they will at least show the opinion I have of your disposition to forgive, and my readiness to furnish you with occasions for exerting it.

And so, Madam, you sometimes sit under the oak where Pope sat? No Druid ever venerated that hallowed plant, or its more hallowed misseltoe, on account of the spirit it enclosed, as I should venerate this from admiration of the spirit it once sheltered! And so you live in shades, and read Gibbon!

He is an entertaining and philosophical historian, yet as Ganganelli said to Count Algarotti, 'I wish these shining wits, in spite of all their philosophy, would manage matters so, that one might hope to meet them in heaven; for one is very sorry to be deprived of such agreeable company to all eternity.' For my own part, I am willing to compound for less wit, and more faith, though I agree with Mr. Jenyns, that it requires an infinite degree of credulity to be an infidel.

I return at intervals to my charming book, with all the eagerness of a glutton. I went through it with more than pleasure—with enthusiasm. I had always a passion for Gray, which his letters are calculated to increase. His poetry is so exquisite, that the delight I felt in reading him is generally mixed with regret that he wrote so little; a sentiment which would diminish the pleasure of it, were it not so perfect as to admit of no diminution.

Though my great admiration of the poetical works of Gray had made me form the highest expectations of his letters, yet my ideas were all fulfilled upon reading them. In my poor opinion they possess all the graces and all the ease which I apprehend ought to distinguish this familiar species of composition. They have also another and a higher excellence; the temper and spirit he almost constantly discovers in the unguarded confidence and security of friendship, will rank him among the most amiable of men; as his charming verses will give him a place among the first of lyric poets. The pleasure one feels on reading the letters of great

and eminent persons, is of a very different kind from that which one receives from their more elaborate works; it is being admitted, as it were, to their very closets and bosoms: whereas the other is only being received in their drawing-rooms on state-days. In the present work, Mr. Mason shows himself to be something better than a good poet: never was there a more generous editor or more faithful friend! What an exquisite pleasure does he take in doing honour to the departed! May his own fame meet with such a guardian, and his own life with such a biographer.

I am also plunged deep in the Lusiad, and am now as much interested in the fortunes of the brave and pious Gama, as ever I was in those of the wandering Greek, *Qui mores hominum multorum vidit.* I began to fear all the enthusiasm was dead, it not having given any signs of life for a long time; but Camoens and Mickle, between them, have contrived to rouse a small portion of it; so that whether it was actually dead, or whether, like the god Baal, it was sleeping, or gone a journey, I cannot tell.

I have looked over *Monsieur* Shakspeare, as you properly call it. Don't you think it has a vast deal of merit? But how miserably inadequate must a translation of Shakspeare ever be! There is the stature, but where is the grace?—the shape, but where is the mein?—the features, but where is the eye—

Glancing from earth to heaven, from heaven to earth.

There is the body, but where is the living spirit,

the animating principle? It is here, as well as in divine things, that 'the letter killeth.' Yet I honour the Comte de Camelan and his associates. What lover of Shakspeare but *must* honour them? It would be an invidious task to glean up two or three trifling mistakes, when we ought rather to wonder at finding so few.

My dear and excellent friends Mrs. E. Bouverie, Captain and Mrs. Middleton, and Mrs. Lloyd, have been at Clifton ever since my return, which has been very agreeable to me. We are in daily expectation of a visit from ————, which we are promised by the last post.

Adieu, my dearest Madam, I wish you perfect health, and sunless bowers, which I conceive to be a very characteristic dog-day wish. You anticipated for me *les chaleurs caniculaires*, and mitigated them by your sweet pretty fan.

Your most obedient and obliged,

H. More.

To the same.

Bristol, 1780.

My dear Madam,

It has been long the fashion to make the most lamentable *Jeremiades* on the badness of the times; still we were made to believe that a new parliament would repair a great part of these evils. Now I am a living witness that this was a false prediction, for, alas! out of the small number of friends and acquaintance I had the honour to boast of in the

British senate, hardly any remain—not to take care of my liberty, for I always thought that would take care of itself, when it was so finely set a going at the Revolution,—but to give me a few franks; for that, dear Madam, is the source and subject of this present philippic against the new parliament. I am afraid, though, that this complaint is impolitic, because it looks as if my friends were in the opposition, and that I had not the good fortune to be known to any of the honourable fraternity of new gentlemen, traders, and authors, who have crept in.

Your obliging letter from Badminton, my dear Madam, found me gone on a ramble (is not that an hibernicism) into Wiltshire, Hants, &c. I did homage to Pan and Sylvanus, and all the rural deities of Stourhead; paid my devoirs to the Apollo Belvidere, and the fair 'statue which enchants the world' at Wilton, which place, as the critic said of the wood and water at Marli, were it not for the pictures and statues, would be the dullest place in the world. But the simple graces and plain magnificence of Lord Palmerston's sweet place at Romsey, is inexpressibly agreeable. I saw nothing so light, *riant*, and habitable; yet its being new-built destroys that satisfaction which arises from the association of ideas in surveying halls of 'grey renown;' terrific armour, worn, perhaps, by heroes who fought the battles of the Tudors and Plantaganets; and avenues of oaks, which have heard the sound of 'Sidney's song, perchance of Surrey's reed.' From this sort of combination of remote images, we derive, I believe, some of the liveliest

pleasures we enjoy; and these delights of the imagination seem to fill up the chasm between those of the senses and of reason; they have less keenness than the one, and less solidity than the other; yet is their dominion not less powerful or less pleasant. One reason of my making this tour was, to avoid the bustle of the Bristol election; but, in keeping clear of Scylla, I dashed against Charybdis; for as it was the great and universal saturnalia of the nation, I ran into the very jaws of half-a-dozen country elections, of which, had I had the honour to be a composer of speeches, I might have made good use.

Many thanks, my dear Madam, for Mr. Walpole's sensible, temperate, and humane pamphlet. I am not *quite* a convert yet to his side of the Chattertonian controversy, though this elegant writer, and all the antiquaries and critics in the world are against me; but I like much the candid regret he every where discovers at not having fostered this unfortunate lad, whose profligate manners, however, I too much fear, would not have done credit to any patronage. Poor Mrs. G. read it, and was more interested than I have seen her.

I am to thank you for 'Cardiphonia.' I like it prodigiously: it is full of vital experimental religion. I thought I liked the three first letters best, but I have not read half the book. Who is the author? From his going a little out of his way to censure the Latin poets, I suspect he is of the calumniated school, though I have found nothing but rational and consistent piety.

I have just finished Johnson's Life of Addison. There is the same exquisite discrimination of character, the same exactness of criticism, and moral discernment, which have distinguished and dignified the other writings of this truly great biographer.

The only thing I am inclined to quarrel with him for, is, that he has perpetuated the malignity of that foe to genius and to worth, John Dennis, of crabbed memory. He has given a quotation of forty or fifty pages from this old snarler's barking at Cato; which produces these two evils, that we lose forty or fifty pages of Johnson's elegant writing, and that the satire, which has some acuteness and more malice, will, by this means, be rescued from that oblivion into which Dennis had fallen; and the slander will now be as durable as its object. *Entre nous*, what Johnson says of Cato may be applied to *his* Irene; the same exalted sentiments, harmonious verse, and highly polished style, and the same deficiency in what relates to the passions and affections. My dear Madam, you are glad my paper is out, and I am sorry, since I have not room to tell you with what truth I am,

Your's affectionately,

H. M.

Hannah More was now again at Hampton, and thus writes to one of her sisters;—

Hampton, 1780.

I would wish you a merry Christmas, as well as happy new year, but that I hate the word merry *so*

applied; it is a fitter epithet for a *bacchanalian* than a *Christian* festival, and seems an apology for idle mirth and injurious excess. What frost—what snow! By the bye, if this same snow were of human invention, I should be apt to say I did not like it. Yet the vast expanse of glistening white on the ground—the fluid brilliants dropping from the trees—and the green-house full of beautiful blossoms and oranges, make it altogether look like some region of enchantment; and as the gravel walks are all swept clean, I parade an hour or two every morning.

I enclose you my Ode on the Marquis of Worcester's Birth-day; it was impossible to refuse a request couched in such terms, and from such a friend as Mrs. Boscawen; but of all the wild flowers in the wilderness, that she should think an ode could spring up in such a soil, is curious. I wrote every line of it one night after eleven o'clock. I will not pretend to say it would have been better, if I had had more time; but this I will say, it could not well have been worse. The concluding stanza was occasioned by the Dutch war, which I heard of that day. I believe you will think I have invoked the muse which inspired Mrs. Mary Deverill, *parsoness* and *poetess*, when she sung in elegiac strains the pity-moving story of the thirty poisoned chickens!

Hampton, 1781.

If we commit any crime, or do any good here, it must be in thought, for our words are few and our

deeds none at all. Poor Hermes Harris is dead! everybody is dead, I think; one is almost ashamed of being alive! That you may not think I pass my time quite idly, I must tell you that I had begun *Belshazzar;* I liked the subject, and have made some progress in it. But that, and all my other employments, have given way to the melancholy occupation of reading over with Mrs. Garrick, all the private letters of the dear deceased master of this melancholy mansion. The employment, though sad, is not without its amusement: it embraces the friendly correspondence of all the men who have made a figure in the annals of business or of literature for the last forty years; for I think I hardly miss a name of any eminence in Great Britain, and not many in France: it includes also all his answers: some of the first wits in the country, confessing their obligations over and over again to his bounty; money given to some, and lent to such numbers as would be incredible, if one did not read it in their own letters. It is not the least instructive part of this employment to consider where almost all these great men are now? The play-writers, where are they? and the poets, are their fires extinguished? Did Lord Bath or Bishop Warburton, or Lord Chatham, or Goldsmith, or Churchill, or Chesterfield, trouble themselves with thinking that the heads which dictated those bright epistles would so soon be laid low. Did they imagine that such a nobody as I am, whom they would have disdained to have reckoned 'with the dogs of their flock,' should have had the arranging and disposing of them. I found my own

letters, but I thought it a breach of trust to take them till they are all finally disposed of.

I enclose you Dean Tucker's answer to my letter of congratulation.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, 1781.

We have stolen away for a few days to town, but I am now so habituated to quiet, that I have scarcely the heart to go out, though I am come here on purpose. As to poor Mrs. Garrick, she keeps herself as secret as a piece of smuggled goods, and neither stirs out herself, or lets any body in. The calm of Hampton is such fixed repose, that an old woman crying fish, or the postman ringing at the door, is an event which excites attention. Mrs. Boscawen is very full of the ode:[1] she would make me hear how finely she has brought herself to read it by daily practice; but she says she has one cruel mortification, she wishes every body to see it, and yet has not the courage to show it to any one, unless I will strike out the two lines about Glanvilla, which I beg to be excused doing. Be cautious, I entreat, of giving copies; my friends know I am so fearful of newspapers, that Mrs. Kennicott actually refused 'Sally Horne' to the Bishop of London.[2] She has told him she will ask my consent, which I do not know very well how to refuse. But it shall be on condition that he gives a handsome piece of his

[1] On the Marquis of Worcester's birth-day.

[2] Bishop Lowth.

writing to your memorandum book, for I am too much of a Bristol woman to give anything for nothing.

To the same.

Hampton, 1781.

We courageously came back yesterday through all the snow. I was desirous to do it, having but a short time now to stay here, and I want a little for writing;[1] that I may afford to be idle in town with less regret. We are forbidden to do *evil* that *good* may come of it, and this looks like doing *good* that *evil* may come of it.

I have just waded through almost nine hundred pages of Madan's book, but retain all my prejudices in favour of Monogamy. There never was such a strange book under such a mask of holiness; in short, I have as great an antipathy to some of 'the gospel according to Mr. Madan,' as ever an infidel had to the Gospel according to St. Matthew. A friend of mine says of him, 'This saint will make sinners after his death.' He treats the *New Testament* very cavalierly under the pretence of the most flaming veneration of the *Old*; and is quite outrageous at the general mistake, he says, that all modern Christians make, that Christ taught a more perfect morality than Moses. I believe the Holy Scriptures were never before made the cover, nay the *vehicle*, of so much indecency.

Your history of the election I read to Mrs.

[1] She was at this time proceeding with the 'Sacred Dramas.'

Garrick, and we agreed it deserved a place in the book called *great events from small causes!* Methinks I envy Burke that 'consciousness of his worth' which he must feel on considering himself rejected only because his talents were a crime. But Providence has wisely contrived to render all its dispensations equal, by making those talents which set one man so much above another, of no esteem in the opinion of those who are without them. The direct contrary is the case with riches: they are most admired by those who want them, and this becomes a spur to industry. So that I do think that even in this world things are carried on hand in hand, more equally than many are willing to allow; for the 'painful pre-eminence' is so mixed with mortification and disappointment, that its pleasures I believe are not a compensation for the envy and plague which it brings. Is it not much better to be easy and happy now, than talked of a thousand years hence, when you either will not know it, or will despise it?

To the same.

London, 1781.

I heard from a person who attended the trial of Lord George Gordon, that the noble prisoner (as the papers call him,) had a quarto bible open before him all the time, and was very angry because he was not permitted to read four chapters in Zechariah. I can less forgive an affectation of enthusiasm in him, because he is a man of loose morals. Where the morals are exact, I can make great allowance for a heated imagination, strong prejudices,

or a wrong bias of judgment. Though I have not the least doubt that he deserved punishment, yet I am glad he is acquitted, for it disappoints the party, and uncanonizes the martyr.

In the evening I went to Audley Street, where pride met with a small mortification; for not being very well recovered from my rheumatic headache, and expecting to meet only the Jenynses and the Coles, I went quite in a dishabille, when I found Lady Edgecombe, the Yorke family, Bishop of Exeter, and, in short, a brilliant, though a small assembly. I was just able to listen, though not to talk, and was very well seated between Soame Jenyns, the Bishop, and Chamberlayne. The other morning Mrs. Garrick took me to Lever's museum; for, to the scandal of my taste, I had never seen it before. If any man had the misfortune to be an atheist, I think he might be converted by perusing that vast book of various nature; as Galen is recorded to have been by his own discoveries in physiology. And yet Buffon is said to be an unbeliever!

Public thanksgivings were returned last Sunday in several churches for the acquittal of Lord George Gordon. I know some who actually heard it in Audley chapel. The famous Mr. Tighe read to us the other evening. He was so polite as to lament that he had not Jephson's tragedy (the Count of Narbonne) in his pocket; but I was not sorry, for I must have sunk very low in his opinion, as he expects every body to faint away, and I am no hand at fainting.

London, 1781.

Mrs. B. having repeatedly desired Johnson to look over her new play of the 'Siege of Sinope' before it was acted, he always found means to evade it; at last she pressed him so closely that he actually refused to do it, and told her that she herself, by carefully looking it over, would be able to see if there was any thing amiss as well as he could. 'But, sir,' said she, 'I have no time. I have already so many irons in the fire.' 'Why then, Madam,' said he, (quite out of patience) 'the best thing I can advise you to do is, to put your tragedy along with your irons.'[1] I dined the other day with Miss Sharpe; among the company was Mrs. Carter and Lady Charlotte Wentworth: this last, to the credit of opposition (for she is Lord Rockingham's sister) is one of the best divines for a woman of quality I have met with. We had a very comfortable, rational day.

The Kennicotts dined here with some of their friends. When the Doctor hobbled in on his two sticks, he put a piece of paper into my hand. I cried out, 'Oh; I will not read it to myself; whatever it is, it shall be made public for the good of the

[1] In the course of the theatrical management of her friend David Garrick, he had irritated the feelings of the Authoress here alluded to, by the rejection of her Tragedy. The lady indulged her spleen in a novel, the express purpose of which was to ridicule and vilify the character of the manager. Mrs. H. More was prevailed upon to write a criticism on the work for the Gentleman's Magazine, which she performed with much spirit and effect; but found, as she declared, so much pleasure in the free indulgence of sarcastic humour, that she resolved never again to trust herself with the use of such a weapon; and to this resolution she strictly adhered through the remainder of her life.

company.' I put it into a gentleman's hands who I knew read well, but imagine my surprize at hearing the following verses, signed by no less a personage than Bishop Lowth:

HANNÆ MORÆ.

VIRGINI PIÆ, ERUDITÆ, ELEGANTI, INGENIO, FACUNDIA ET SAPIENTIA PARITER ILLUSTRI.

'Omnes Sulpiciam legant puellæ,'
Omnes hanc pueri legant senesque,
Omnes hanc hilares, et hanc severi.
Quæ palmam geminas tulit per artes,
'Et vinctæ pede vocis et solutæ!'
Cujus qui pede legerit soluta,
Nullam dixerit esse tersiorem!
Cujus carmina qui bene estimarit
Nullam dixerit esse sanctiorem!
Huic adsunt Charites faventque Musæ,
Dum sic pectora Virginum tenella
Pulchris imbuit, artibus, sequaces
Exemplo monitis, amore, nutu,
Informans animos; Stiloque signat,
Mox ventura quod Addisonianis
Possint secula comparare chartis.

I spent an agreeable hour at my dear Mrs. Vesey's, for, to the general astonishment, her poor husband has got another reprieve. I know no house where there is such good rational society, and a conversation so general, so easy, and so unpretending.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Adelphi, Feb. 1781.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your most agreeable little *volume* of *six pages* never could have been bestowed upon a reader

more worthy of it, if the highest veneration for the author, and the keenest relish for the composition, could give the reader a claim to the title of worthy; but, alas! yours, like many other *paluable works*, is of so serious a cast as to have given me fully as much pain as pleasure. How much do I pity the poor ——'s, I am afraid it will be almost too much for our excellent friend Mrs.——. I grieve that her great virtues are exposed to such severe trials. Reason, religion, and time, when they come to operate, do wonders—such wonders as the sufferer in the first attack of sorrow has no conception of. Yet one cannot but lament that persons of the best sense and most piety, suffer more, perhaps, from the first assaults of affliction than any others; and those who bear distress with the most dignity, I am persuaded feel it with the greatest intenseness. This good family possess the only consolation which can mitigate such distress—a deep sense of the truth and efficacy of the Christian religion; yet I am going to say a bold thing—I never could observe that nature suffered the less, because grace triumphed the more. And hence arises, as I take it, the glory of the Christian sufferer,—he feels affliction more intensely than a bad man, or grace would not have its perfect work; as it would not be difficult to subdue that which it was not difficult to endure. Poor Lady ——, too! her distress is a very poignant one indeed; I begin to think, happy are those who do not multiply their chances of suffering, by increasing their connections!

I can better *send* you the Bishop's verses, than I

could *give* them to you, for reasons which will be clear enough when you see them; as, without the least affectation, I am confounded by the praise which he gives me only because he does not know me. I would not wish any copy to be taken, as I would not for the world they should get into print, which would never be attributed to accident, but to the most egregious vanity in me; and the Bishop writes so little, and so excellently, that people are glad to catch at any thing of his. I had a particular request from his lordship to give him a copy of my childish verses on Mother Bunch's Tales; you will wonder, my dear Madam, that so wise a personage should pardon my impertinence, in attacking learning in her own proper fort. You will not forget that the idea of new dressing the popular old poem of 'Learning is better than house and land,' in this my renowned work of Mother Bunch's Tales, was suggested to me by Mr. Pope's having modernized a morsel of no less popularity in this fine couplet,

> 'Above, how high progressive life may go,
> How wide around, how deep extend below!'

which I really believe, though he had never the candour to own it as I have, he stole from those beautiful and original lines, which are in more mouths than any verses of mine will ever be,

> 'Here you go up, up, up; and here you go down, down, downy;
> And here you go backward and forward; and here you go round, round, roundy.'

And now, my dear Madam, you will readily allow

that I have said enough of myself. I do not expose myself so much to every body; and I own it to be very hard that you should bear all the weight of my folly and impertinence, merely as a mark of my esteem and respect. If I do not speak or write of my foolish verses to any other person, it is because I know no one else who unites so great a relish for good things, with so much charity for indifferent ones. I hope I need not say in which class I place my own. There is no room, I think, for an equivoque. Adieu, my dear Madam,

Your most faithful and obliged,

H. More.

To one of her sisters.

London, 1781.

Tell my father I am quite delighted with his verses, and particularly that he could write them in so good a hand; I have put them among my curiosities. I do not think I shall write such verses at eighty-one. Saturday I had a comfortable dinner with my dear Mrs. Boscawen. She is transported with the bishop's verses. I wish he had had a better subject; but like Swift, Rochester, and other wits, he was resolved, I suppose, to shew how well he could write on nothing.

On Friday evening I went to Mr. Tighe's, to hear him read Jephson's tragedy. 'Praise,' says Dr. Johnson, 'is the tribute which every man is expected to pay for the grant of perusing a manuscript,' and indeed I could praise without hurting

my conscience, for the 'Count of Narbonne' has considerable merit; the language is very poetical, and parts of the fable very interesting; the plot managed with art, and the characters well drawn. The love scenes, I think, are the worst; they are prettily written, and full of flowers, but are rather cold; they have more poetry than passion. I do not mean to detract from Mr. Jephson's merit by this remark, for it does not lessen a poet's fame, to say he excels more in painting the terrible, than the tender passions. Think of Johnson's having apartments in Grosvenor Square![1] but he says it is not half so convenient as Bolt Court. He has just finished the poets; Pope is the last. I am sorry he has lost so much credit by Lord Lyttleton's: he treats him almost with contempt; makes him out a poor writer, and an envious man; speaks well only of his 'Conversion of St. Paul,' of which he says, 'it is sufficient to say it has never been answered.' Mrs. Montagu and Mr. Pepys, his lordship's two chief surviving friends, are very angry.

We spent one very agreeable day at Mrs. Delany's: her inseparable friend the Duchess Dowager of Portland was there. This charming Duchess is very kind to me, and honours me with particular attention. She has invited me to spend some time in the summer at Bulstrode. Perhaps you do not know that she is Prior's 'noble, lovely, little Peggy.' She remembers him perfectly well, and promises I shall read a quarto manuscript

[1] At Mr. Thrale's new house.

which he left to her father, Lord Oxford, which contains Dialogues of the Dead, in the manner of Lucian.

London, 1781.

On Friday I was at a great dinner at Mr. Middleton's; the company was numerous; it threatened therefore to be dull; but I had a great deal of agreeable conversation with the Bishop of Chester, (Dr. Porteus) who is an excellent critic, and perfectly to my taste; he is, moreover, I believe, a very good man. I hope great popularity, and the estimation in which his company is held, will not spoil him, nor make him relax; it requires a steady head to stand so high without being giddy. We little folks below, that walk quietly in the vale, know nothing of the danger, and are therefore pert and censorious.

I have often said, I do not know so hard a trade as pleasure, if it be well followed. I am quite tired of visiting, and yet I do not go to a quarter of the places I am asked to. I never knew a great party turn out so pleasantly as the other night at the Pepys's. There was all the pride of London,—every wit and every wit-ess; though these, when they get into a cluster, I have sometimes found to be as dull as other people; but the spirit of the evening was kept up on the strength of a little lemonade, till past eleven, without cards, scandal, or politics. Mrs. Boscawen threw me into no small confusion; she got among the men, not less than twenty, all Beaux Esprits, and

gave them all privately, Bishop Lowth's verses to read.

A very affecting circumstance happened yesterday. Mrs. Garrick and I were invited to an assembly at Mrs. Thrale's. There was to be a fine concert, and all the fine people were to be there; but the chief object was to meet the Brahmin and the two Parsees, and I promised myself no small pleasure in seeing the disciples of the ancient Zoroaster, for such these are, and worshippers of fire. Just as my hair was dressed, in came a servant to forbid our coming, for that Mr. Thrale was dead! A very few hours later, and he would have died in this assembly. What an awful event! He was in the prime of life, but had the misfortune to be too rich, and to keep too sumptuous a table, at which he indulged too freely. He was a sensible and respectable man. I am glad the poor lady has in her distress, such a friend as Dr. Johnson; he will suggest the best motives of consolation.

The other night we were at a very great and full assembly. My distaste of these scenes of insipid magnificence I have not words to tell. Every faculty but the sight is starved, and that has a surfeit. I like conversation parties when they are of the right sort, and I do not care whether it be composed of four, or forty persons, because if you know and like the generality of them, nothing is more easy than to pick out a snug pleasant corner; whereas it is impossible to do so, when two or three hundred people are continually coming in, popping a courtesy, exhibiting their fine

persons, and popping out again, or nailing themselves down to a card table.

London, 1781.

I was last Monday at a meeting at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, where were all the brides, Duncannon and Althorp; and I had the pleasure of a vast deal of snug chat with the Bishop, Mr. Walpole, Mrs. Montagu, and Mrs. Carter.

Mrs. Kennicott tells me Bishop Lowth insists upon my publishing 'Sensibility,' and all my other poems collected, immediately, that people may have them altogether. The Dean of Gloucester has sent me his book against Locke, splendidly bound. I have not yet had the manners to write and thank him for it. I am afraid it will draw upon him a number of enemies and answers, which at his time of life cannot be very agreeable. I believe where the spirit of controversy has once possessed the mind, no time can weaken it.

I was on Monday night at a very snug little party at Mr. Ramsay's. He has written an Essay on the Harmony of Numbers, and on Versification. He wished me to hear it read, and convened a small party of wits. It is scientific and ingenious, but I do not allow him his positions, and very pertly told him so, for he seems to set written rules above the 'nicely-judging ear,' which I will never allow; and he denies Pope to have been an excellent harmonist, which I will never allow neither. On Friday I dined at Mrs. Boscawen's, only we two. We had a snug day, and a deal of that social cor-

dial chat, that is so preferable to all the mummery of great parties. At eight I went to Lady ——'s large assembly, which was very magnificently dull.

Tuesday we were a small and very choice party at Bishop Shipley's. Lord and Lady Spencer, Lord and Lady Althorp, Sir Joshua, Langton, Boswell, Gibbon, and to my agreeable surprize, Dr. Johnson, were there.

Mrs. Garrick and he had never met since her bereavement. I was heartily disgusted with Mr. Boswell, who came up stairs after dinner, much disordered with wine, and addressed me in a manner which drew from me a sharp rebuke, for which I fancy he will not easily forgive me. Johnson came to see us the next morning, and made us a long visit. On Mrs. Garrick's telling him she was always more at her ease with persons who had suffered the same loss with herself, he said that was a comfort she could seldom have, considering the superiority of his merit, and the cordiality of their union. He bore his strong testimony to the liberality of Garrick. He reproved me with pretended sharpness for reading 'Les Pensees de Pascal,' or any of the Port Royal authors; alleging that as a good Protestant, I ought to abstain from books written by Catholics. I was beginning to stand upon my defence, when he took me with both hands, and with a tear running down his cheeks, 'Child,' said he, with the most affecting earnestness, 'I am heartily glad that you read pious books, by whomsoever they may be written.'

London, 1781.

'We are just returned from Hampton. I carried 'Belshazzar' there, thinking that in such a scene of quiet and repose, I should be likely to write a great deal, but the beautiful scenes of the country, especially at this time of the year, when all nature is young and blooming, take such possession of my mind, and dissipate it so much, that I could sooner think of writing in all the bustle of London, than in the still tranquillity of Hampton; I mean unless I were settled there long enough for the novelty of rural objects to wear off. The other day I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Dr. Barnard, the very learned Provost of Eton; he justifies all that I had heard of him, and no man's reputation is more high. We had a great deal of conversation, and though his first *abord* is not quite pleasing, yet I was never more entertained.

On Monday I was at Mrs. Vesey's; she had collected her party from the Baltic to the Po, for there was a Russian nobleman, an Italian virtuoso, and General Paoli. In one corner was the pleasantest group in the world, and having peeped into the various parties in both rooms, I fixed upon that which I liked best. These were the agreeable Provost of Eton, Mrs. Boscawen, Mr. Pepys, Mr. Walpole, and the Bishop of Killaloe. The conversation was quite in my way, and in a great measure within my reach; it related chiefly to poetry and criticism.

We begin now to be a little cheerful at home, and to have our small parties. One such we have just had, and the day and evening turned out very pleasant. Johnson was in full song, and I quarrelled with him sadly; I accused him of not having done justice to the 'Allegro,' and 'Penseroso.' He spoke disparagingly of both. I praised Lycidas, which he absolutely abused, adding, 'if Milton had not written the Paradise Lost, he would have only ranked among the minor poets: he was a Phidias that could cut a Colossus out of a rock, but could not cut heads out of cherry-stones.' [1]

Boswell brought to my mind the whole of a very mirthful conversation at dear Mrs. Garrick's, and my being made by Sir William Forbes, the umpire in a trial of skill between Garrick and Boswell, which could most nearly imitate Dr. Johnson's manner. I remember I gave it for Boswell in familiar conversation, and for Garrick in reciting poetry. Mrs. Boscawen shone with her usual mild lustre.

Mr. Walpole has done me the honour of inviting me to Strawberry Hill; as he is said to be a shy man, I must consider this as a great compliment.

[1] This has probably been recorded in his Life, but is given here as being written on the day on which, and by the person to whom, it was said.

London, 1781.

I have now put a period to my pleasurable campaign, and as we shall be in the country for the greatest part of the little time we have left, I have refused to make any more engagements; indeed I am quite tired of assemblies and conversation parties, and long for *disengagement*, (if there be such a word) and leisure. We dined at Mrs. Wilmot's the other day, and the Provost of Eton entertained me much with his wit and humour.

On Monday we had a farewell party at Mrs. Vesey's, where we were a little sad to think, how many of us might never meet again, particularly poor Mrs. Vesey herself, who is going to Ireland, at an advanced age, and in bad health. It was a very choice party. Mr. Burke came and sat next me for an hour. I complained of my false countrymen, and he repeated my epitaph in Redcliff church. I was astonished that he had not forgotten it. The Bishop of Chester was on my other hand, and the conversation was kept up with great liveliness. I asked the Bishop if he thought he should carry his bill against Sunday amusements through both houses. Burke said he believed it would go through *their* house, though his *pious friend Wilkes* opposed it with all his might. Oriental Jones was with us; but he is one of those great geniuses whom it is easier to read, than to hear; for whenever he speaks, it is with seeming reluctance, though master of many languages.

I am just come in from paying morning visits to

two deans, Carlisle and Gloucester. On Tuesday Mrs. Boscawen carried me to Glanvilla; we had the pleasantest tête-á-tête day imaginable, and walked about and sat under the spreading oaks, and eat our cold chicken, and drank our tea, as happy folks are wont to do.

We have made no visit of length, except one to the Duchess Dowager of Portland, which was very pleasant, for she has much knowledge, and her attractions owe nothing to her rank.

CHAPTER II.

HANNAH MORE returned as usual to Bristol, in June 1781, but was at this time accompanied by her friend Mrs. Garrick, who spent a month with her sisters; and in the December of the same year, 1781, she again became an inmate with Mrs. G. at Hampton, from whence her first letter to one of her family is dated.

Hampton, Dec. 24, 1781.

Poor Ayrey dropped down dead a few days ago! He was the only atheist I ever knew; but what I thought particularly argued a wrong judgment in him was this, that he was an honest, good-natured man, which certainly he should not have been on his principles. He was a fatalist, and if he snuffed the candle, or stirred the fire, or took snuff, he solemnly protested he was compelled to do it; and it did not depend on his own discretion, whether he should buckle his shoe, or tie his garter. If I did not know him well, I would not have believed there had existed such a character. He always confessed he was a coward, and had a natural fear

of pain and death, though he knew he should be as if he had never been. I cannot think of him without horror and compassion. He knows by this time whether a future state was really such a ridiculous invention of priestcraft and superstition, as he always said it was.

I met at dinner the other day, at Mrs. Boscawen's, Lady Smith; she is dowager of the pious Lord Chief Baron; really an excellent good woman, though a little uncharitable in her opinions about others; she said my friend was the best *natural* woman she had ever known.

H. More to her sister.

Hampton, Jan. 17, 1782.

How does poor wretched Louisa?[1] You have not sent me the halfpenny 'Tale of Woe' which I wrote; it may be of use in procuring subscriptions. Mrs. Garrick and I go to London before Wednesday.

[1] This alludes to a beautiful insane young creature who was found under a hay-stack, near Bristol. She occasionally betrayed herself to be a foreigner; it was supposed a German; and always showed unequivocal symptoms of being a high-bred gentlewoman. Every care was taken to discover how she got to Bristol, or who she was, but in vain. All the ladies in the neighbourhood were kind in supplying her necessities for nearly three years, during which time she could never be enticed into a house, for she said '*men* dwelt there.' It was very desirable that she should be supported comfortably in a private mad-house, for which end Miss H. More was extremely active in procuring subscriptions from her friends to second her own efforts in her behalf. Among those who were most struck by this affecting incident, and who contributed most largely, were Lord and Lady Bathurst; and by these benevolent exertions, a fund was raised sufficient to place this poor maniac in a very respectable private mad-house near Bristol, under the superintendence of the Misses More, where every possible endeavour was used (but without effect) to restore her. She afterwards died at Guy's Hospital.

She, to her mass, and I, to my mantua-maker—she to be daubed with ashes, and I to be decorated with vanities. And now we are upon vanities, what do you think is the reigning mode as to powder!—only turmerick, that coarse dye which stains yellow. The Goths and Vandals, the Picts and Saxons are come again. It falls out of the hair and stains the skin so, that every pretty lady must look as yellow as a crocus; which I suppose will become a better compliment than as white as a lily. I have just made a very important discovery in poetical antiquities, which I hereby make a present of to all the commentators upon Virgil, every one of whom it has escaped; it is this—that the dish the wandering Trojans eat first on the Latian shore was a flap-jack; it could be nothing else, and the pretty childish remark of that great hungry boy, Master Ascanias, (that they had eaten their tables,) means nothing more than that they devoured the bottom crust on which the apples were baked. I hope you will allow there is a great critical acumen, and much recondite learning in this remark, which I think will pass muster with some of Warburton's.

I yesterday returned Mr. Strahan the last proof of my book; I suppose it will be out in a few days, though I do not know when, nor do I even know what is to be the price. I trust all to Cadell's prudence. I have desired him to charge it as low as he can. I actually feel very awkward about this new book. Strangers who read it will, I am afraid, think I am good; and I would not willingly appear better than I am, which is certainly the case

with all who do not act as seriously as they write. I think sometimes of what Prior makes Solomon say of himself in his fallen state—'They brought my proverbs to confute my life.'

Adelphi, Feb. 17, 1782.

I met yesterday, at Mrs. ——'s, the Bishop of Chester and Mrs. Porteus. The Bishop inquired very much when the book[1] was to appear, to my no small confusion, for the reason I am going to give. The book lay on Mrs. Boscawen's table, and we had just discovered a most ridiculous blunder, for by the misplacing of a single asterisk, the bishop is made a painter, and Sir Joshua Reynolds a bishop. Neither Mrs. B. nor I had courage to mention this, so I very foolishly only said, I could not tell when it would be published. I have sent the history of this blunder to Cadell, and with a dash of a pen it is tolerably rectified.

After all, the kindest thing to my friends is *not* to send them a book; for a present from the author is very inconvenient, as I have often found to my cost; since it forces the person so distinguished to write against their conscience, and to praise what perhaps they secretly despise. Besides, as I have mentioned all my poetical friends, it would be rather awkward, after offering the incense, to thrust the censer in their faces.

[1] Sacred Dramas; with the Poem on Sensibility in the same volume. The work has passed through nineteen editions.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

They are come! the books I mean; I have found them just now in the hall—a packet from Mr. Cadell; I had them brought up. 'I put in my thumb, and pulled out a plumb;' viz. I drew out one all sewed in yellow, as I directed, and while Ayre is cutting the leaves, very carefully I hope, I sit down to write to the founder of this feast. I have looked only at two pages, the first and the last. In the first I found my dear Duchess most handsomely inscribed and transmitted to posterity. In the last I read 'one hero more;' that hero should be a hero in philosophy; *il est devenu content, et moi aussi.*

But now to your first letter.—You are so afraid that strangers will think you good. Is it *you*, my dear friend, who say that? read the 16th verse of the fifth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew. When they read your dramas they will think you good. I am not *afraid* so, I *hope* so, else I am sure they must think you a hypocrite; there is but that alternative, "for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh," and if you can *so speak*, and not out of an honest and good heart, *tant pis pour vous;* but I never yet suspected that any one could bring 'your proverbs to confute your life.'

The ancient and pleasant Jenynses spent a day with me, and not having been out of London for

some months, were delighted and delightful. Adieu, my dear Madam, I have called for my *Livre Jaune*, I hope it is cut by this time, and if so you will not wonder that I cannot say a word more, but that I am ever yours,

F. B.

From Miss More to Mrs. Boscawen.

1782.

MY DEAR MADAM,

'Les morts n'ecrivent point,' says Madame de Maintenon. And yet Mrs. Rowe, who was, I opine, a much better Christian, (albeit a little too fanciful) has flatly contradicted this assertion, by *making* them write. However, maugre my veneration for the English lady, I beg, my dear Madam, that you will be pleased to adopt the assertion of the French one, 'que les morts n'ecrivent point,' and for the same reason too, namely, 'que je me contois de leur nombre.'

You see, my dear Madam, the extent of your influence over me. 'Go to Bath,' said you, 'if you have a return of your complaint.' To Bath I came, et me voiçi retablie! But I do not at all like this foolish frivolous place, and shall leave it as soon as the nymph of the spring permits.

Being here, naturally reminds me to speak of Mrs. Macauley. I feel myself extremely scandalized at her conduct, and yet I did not esteem her; I knew her to be absurd, vain, and affected, but never could have suspected her of the indecent, and I am sorry to say, profligate turn which her late actions

and letters have betrayed. The men do so rejoice and so exult, that it is really provoking; yet have they no real cause for triumph; for this woman is far from being any criterion by which to judge of the whole sex; she was not feminine either in her writings or her manners; she was only a tolerably clever man! Did I ever tell you, my dear Madam, an answer her daughter once made to me? Desirous, from civility, to take some notice of her, and finding she was reading Shakspeare, I asked her if she was not delighted with many parts of King John? 'I never read the *kings*, ma'am,' was the truly characteristic reply.

I have got Lowth's Isaiah. It appears to me to be a work of great labour and erudition; but better calculated for scholars than plain Christians, as the notes are rather critical than devotional. The Bishop, however, is an admirable writer. His book, *De Sacra Poesi*, is a treasure, and has taught me to consider the Divine Book it illustrates under many new and striking points of view; it makes one appreciate the distinct and characteristic excellence of the sacred poets and historians, in a manner wonderfully entertaining and instructive.

My very agreeable friend, Mrs. Kennicott, has strongly recommended to me a thing just published by Dr. Glasse, from the French. It is called, 'A Lady of Quality's advice to her Children,' &c. The author seems to have known perfectly the human heart, and to have despised the world, from a full conviction of its nothingness, upon a thorough acquaintance with it.

I have just been running over the posthumous Letters of Shenstone and his correspondents, and I think them the worst collection that ever was published with real names. Yet do not you, my dear Madam, find something touching in a *real* correspondence, however indifferently executed? To see a commerce of affection carried on between a set of persons from their youth, when all is gay and smiling; then to have the same people arriving at the next period, when they are the slaves of cares, of vexation, and of disappointment; and then to watch them fall one by one, through the broken arches of the bridge of life, till perhaps but one is left of the social set; and surely in this case, '*'Tis the survivor dies,*'—last of all, he himself falls, and you are told in a note, perhaps, that 'this ingenious gentleman, just as he attained some important point which had been the object of his ambition, or reached the summit of his wishes by the possession of an ample fortune—*died.*' Whether this will have the honour to kiss your hands in town, or whether you were tempted to Badminton by your beloved Duchess, I know not; but this I know, that I am with perfect respect, dearest Madam,

Ever yours,

H. More.

From H. More to her sister.

London, 1782.

The word *Sacred* in the title is a damper to the dramas. It is tying a millstone about the neck of Sensibility, which will drown them both together. I was one night at a large blue-stocking party, at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. All the old set were there, that death and sickness have spared, with the addition of the Bishop of Peterborough (Hinchliffe.)

Bishop Lowth has just finished the Dramas, and sent me word, that although I have paid him the most swinging compliment he ever received, he likes the whole book more than he can say. But the Bishop of Chester's compliment was most solid; he said he thought it would do a vast deal of *good*; and that is the praise best worth having. Well, I think I have said enough for myself now, or I could treat you with some more fine things from other quarters, and which I believe as little as those who utter them; so there is no harm done on my part at least, for I had neither the guilt of falsehood, nor the weakness of credulity.

Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Chapone, and Mrs. Carter, are mightily pleased that I have attacked that mock feeling and sensibility which is at once the boast and disgrace of these times, and which is equally deficient in taste and truth. Ask Dr. Stonehouse if he has read 'Cardiphonia,' by Mr. Newton of Olney. There is in it much vital religion, and much of the experience of a good Christian, who

feels and laments his own imperfections, and weaknesses. I am up to the ears in books. I have just finished six volumes of Jortin's Sermons; elegant, but cold, and very low in doctrine,—'plays round the head, but comes not near the heart.' Cardiphonia does; I like it much, though not every sentiment or expression it contains: I have almost gone through three very thick quartos of Mr. Gibbon's History of the Lower Empire; a fine, but insidious narrative of a dull period; this I read aloud every day from dinner to tea. It is melancholy to observe the first corruptions of Christianity in the fourth century, and I never rise from the book, without feeling sad and disgusted. Gibbon is a malignant painter, and though he does give the likeness of depraved Christianity, he magnifies deformities, and takes a profane delight in making the picture as hideous as he can. Indeed, in the two last volumes he has taken some pains to hide the cloven foot; but whenever a Christian emperor, or bishop of established reputation is brought forward, his encomiums have so much coldness, and his praises so much sneer, that you cannot help discovering contempt where he professes panegyric: but of all the birds in the air, who do you think is his favourite—the strict and rigid Athanasius! Of all the saints, and all the fathers, I should never have guessed *he* would have been the object of Mr. Gibbon's applause. Julian you may naturally suppose is the man after his own heart; I expected it would be so. He is more decent on the subject of Constantine's conversion than I expected: though indeed I should be very

sorry that the truth of the Christian religion hung by so slender a thread as that miracle. However, I am now plunging into other studies than the disputes of Arius and his antagonists, with which my head has been filled, and am pleasantly engaged to spend the evening with Eneas, at Evander's rustic banquet; which, however, I shall not half enjoy, because I know that my favourite Pallas will be killed before I go to bed.

From the same to the same.

London, 1782.

I spent an evening last week at Dr. Kennicott's, with the new Provost of Eton, and Mrs. Roberts. I have a certain awkwardness about me, which I have never yet been able to get rid of; it is, that I can never congratulate any man on honours and dignities which fall to him by the death of another. I tried to wish Dr. Roberts joy, but could not do it; I do not much wonder at it indeed in this particular case, because I was very fond of Dr. Barnard, and have received a thousand attentions from him. However, I am glad for the sake of so many of my friends who are connected with him, that Dr. Roberts is made Provost. He is a good poet, and a respectable man; an appendage which does not always belong to a good poet. *Tant pis.* On Wednesday I dined at Lady Middleton's, with Mrs. Carter, &c. I was quite flattered with the many cordial things good Jonas Hanway said to me about the Dramas. He told me he had sat down to read

them with fear and trembling, as he had persuaded himself it was taking an undue liberty with the Scriptures; but he had no sooner finished them, than he ran off to the bookseller, bought three or four, and went to a great boarding-school, where he has some little friends. He gave the governess the book, and told her it was part of her duty to see that all her girls studied it thoroughly.

I spent the evening at Dr. Kennicott's. Among other company was mythology Bryant, who is as pleasant as he is learned. We have since dined together at Mrs. Montagu's, and are become great friends. He 'bears his faculties so meekly,' and has such simplicity of manners, that I take to him as I did to Hermes Harris, whom every body must regret, that had the pleasure and advantage of knowing him. Only Bryant is the pleasanter man. He told me an amusing anecdote of one of the little princes. He had been that morning to Windsor to present his book. He was met in the anti-chamber by the youngest of them, who begged to look at it. When it was put into his hands, he held it upside down, and glancing his eyes for a moment over the pages, returned it with an air of important graciousness, pronouncing it—excellent!

We have been a few days at Hampton, from whence we returned yesterday: the weather was unpleasant, and windy enough, yet I contrived to be out of doors the greater part of the time; it does me a vast deal of good to go for a few days into pure air, after being smoke-dried in this 'scene of sin and sea-coal.'

I dined to-day at Apsley House. I was exceedingly diverted with my Lord Chancellor, who, the minute he saw me, cried out? 'Well, what do they say? is the ministry to go out?' I could not help saying, he put me in mind of Sir Robert Walpole, who on being asked the same question, replied, 'I really do not know, I have not seen the papers.'

The next day I was at Bishop Barrington's; he is a delightful man; the more I know of him, the more I like him; quite the man of breeding, with great sense and piety. I am told they spend good part of their fortune in acts of charity. I also met your new Bishop, Dr. Bagot. A thought to the memory of his unburied predecessor filled my mind, while every body was congratulating him on his new honours. He is a good man; of exact morals, and has a great deal of that charity which giveth her goods to the poor, but not quite so much of that which consists in tenderness to the opinions of others. I dined another day with Dr. ——. He had not read my book, which saved me from a violent quarrel; for you may guess how great his dislike must be to a book which begins with praising Milton, and ends with praising God.

I breakfasted with Miss Hamilton the other morning at St. James's. There was only dear Mrs. Carter, and a very agreeable nobleman. Miss H. told the queen she expected me, and she charged her with all manner of handsome and flattering messages, desiring me above all things to pursue the same path, and to go on by writing a sacred drama upon the history of Joseph.

Hampton, 1782.

When I was in town last week, we had another *last* breakfast at St. James's. There I found Lord Monboddo, Mrs. Carter, that pleasantest of the peerage Lord Stormont, and Count Marechale, a very agreeable foreign nobleman, and a worthy man: he has almost promised to put the story of our poor insane Louisa into German for me. I was three times with Mrs. Montagu the week I stayed in town. We spent one evening with her and Miss Gregory alone, to take leave of the Hill Street house; and you never saw such an air of ruin and bankruptcy as every thing around us wore. We had about three feet square of carpet, and that we might all put our feet upon it we were obliged to sit in a circle in the middle of the room; just as if we were playing at 'hunt the slipper.' She was full of encomiums of Bristol, and of every one she saw there. She is now settled in Portman Square, where I believe we were among the first to pay our compliments to her. I had no conception of any thing so beautiful. To all the magnificence of a very superb London house, is added the scenery of a country retirement. It is so seldom that any thing superb is pleasant, that I was extremely struck with it. I could not help looking with compassion on the amiable proprietor, *shivering at a breeze:* and who can at the best enjoy it so very little a while. She has however my ardent wishes for her continuance in a world to which she is an ornament and a blessing.

On Sunday, I breakfasted at the Bishop of Chester's, and after a couple of hours good conversation, they took me to the Chapel Royal, where he preached. 'As I know committee-men, and committee-men know me,' I was of course well accommodated.; else it is but a disagreeable place to go to, for it takes up almost all the day to go to church once, and there is more music, and more bustle, and more staring than I like. The king and queen both looked very pale. The sermon, which I should have blamed in a village, was very well suited to a court. It was an eloquent and able vindication of Christianity; the text, "For the Jews seek a sign," &c. They were so kind as to ask me to eat some orthodox beef and pudding with them, which I declined.

At a party the other day I was placed next General Paoli, and as I have not spoken seven sentences of Italian these seven years, I had not that facility in expressing myself which I used to have. I therefore begged hard to carry on the conversation in French. By the bye, I believe I never told you that Paoli is my chief beau and flirt this winter. We talk whole hours. He has a general good taste in the Belles Lettres, and is fond of reciting passages from Dante and Ariosto. He is extremely lively when set a going; quotes from Shakspeare, and raves in his praise. He is particularly fond of Romeo and Juliet, I suppose because the scene is laid in Italy. I did not know he had such very agreeable talents; but he will not talk in English,

and his French is mixed with Italian. He speaks no language with purity.

On Monday I was at a very great assembly at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. Conceive to yourself one hundred and fifty or two hundred people met together, dressed in the extremity of the fashion; painted as red as bacchanals; poisoning the air with perfumes; treading on each other's gowns; making the crowd they blame; not one in ten able to get a chair; protesting they are engaged to ten other places; and lamenting the fatigue they are not obliged to endure; ten or a dozen card-tables, crammed with dowagers of quality, grave ecclesiastics and yellow admirals; and you have an idea of an assembly. I never go to these things when I can possibly avoid it, and stay when there as few minutes as I can.

Hampton, 1782.

The verses I enclose were written in consequence of a little accident that happened at an Oyster Club, consisting of about half a dozen learned men, and two or three ladies. I think them neatly turned. It is no small compliment that I have had lately three sprightly copies of verses from three of the gravest men in England, whom posterity will hardly believe to have written epigrams! Before we left the supper-table, Dr. Horne slipped a piece of paper into my hand, upon which I observed he had been writing, concealing it under the table.

'To Bamber Gascoigne, Esq. on his having acci-

dentally overturned a cruet of vinegar and oil upon a gauze apron of Miss Hannah More's, alluding to the good temper with which she laughed off the accident.

'Like Hannibal why dost thou come
With vinegar prepared,
As if the gentle Hannah's heart
Like Alpine rocks were hard?

'All sharp and poignant as thou art,
The acid meets a foil;
Obedient still to nature's law
Superior floats the oil.'

I believe I shall soon be as bad, or I should rather say as good, as my melancholy friend: for the follies, and distresses, and vices of this town, especially of the great world, throw a gloom over, and sadden the spirit of pleasure in society. I hear of nothing but politics, destruction, and despair; and those who grumble are such excellent calculators, that I believe their morals, estates, and constitutions will be knocked up much at the same time with their country. I find the general character and dispositions of the town grow worse every winter, and then they talk of the taxes, and the high price of sugar and pepper, as if *these* were the only sources of all the evils we suffer.

I am diverted with the conjectures which are formed of my principles, from the Dramas. Some say I am a mystic, because I make Hezekiah talk of the highest of his claims to mercy being founded on *indulgence* and not *reward*.

London, 1782.

I paid my visit to Apsley House on Wednesday. The Lord Chancellor was particularly kind and friendly, and gave me a pressing invitation to dine there the next day, or any other day when he could get disengaged from the cabinet; but charged me never to come when he had any engagement abroad. On Saturday I dined with the patriots at Bishop Shipley's. You may be sure they were in high spirits at so large a division in the House of Commons. Indeed I could not help rejoicing with them at any event that bids fair to put an end to this ill-omened war.

London, 1782.

Poor Johnson is in a bad state of health: I fear his constitution is broken up; I am quite grieved at it; he will not leave an abler defender of religion and virtue behind him; and the following little touch of tenderness which I heard of him last night from one of the Turk's Head Club, endears him to me exceedingly. There are always a great many candidates ready, when any vacancy happens in that club, and it requires no small interest and reputation to get elected; but upon Garrick's death, when numberless applications were made to succeed him, Johnson was deaf to them all; he said, No, there never could be found any successor worthy of such a man; and he insisted upon it there should be a year's widowhood in the club, before they thought of a new election. In Dr.

Johnson some contrarieties very harmoniously meet; if he has too little charity for the opinions of others, and too little patience with their faults, he has the greatest tenderness for their persons. He told me the other day, he hated to hear people whine about metaphysical distresses, when there was so much want and hunger in the world. I told him I supposed, then, he never wept at any tragedy but Jane Shore, who had died for want of a loaf. He called me a saucy girl, but did not deny the inference.

I spent a delightful day with Mrs. Delany. She is eighty-two years old, and blind, yet she is the object of my veneration, and I almost said envy. Such an excellent mind, so cultivated, such a tranquil grateful spirit, such a composed piety! She retains all that tenderness of heart which people are supposed to lose, and generally *do* lose in a very advanced age. She told me with some tears, that she had no dread of death, (besides her extreme unworthiness) but what arose from the thought, how terribly her loss would be felt by one or two dear friends. Her courage entirely sunk under that idea.

London, 1782.

Thursday I spent the evening at the Bishop of Llandaff's. Mrs. Barrington is so perfectly well-bred, and the bishop[1] so delightful, that it is impossible not to be happy in their company. Mitred

[1] Dr. Barrington, afterwards Bishop of Durham.

Chester and all the favourites were there. On Good Friday I went to hear the Bishop of Llandaff preach; he is extremely sensible, and deeply serious. Mrs. Carter and I met at a little breakfast party, with a French lady who writes metaphysical books. We got into great disgrace, for saying that a little common sense and a little Scripture would lead one much further and safer, than volumes of metaphysics. She forgave us, however, on condition we would promise to read two huge quartos, which she has just translated. What Mrs. Carter will do, I know not, but I shall certainly never fulfil my part of the compact. It is a terrible fetter upon the liberty of free-born English conversation, to have so many foreigners as this town now abounds with, imposing their language upon us.

It has affected me very much to hear of our king's being constrained to part with all his confidential friends, and his own personal servants, in the late general sweep. Out of an hundred stories, I will only tell you one, which concerns your old acquaintance, Lord Bateman: he went to the king as usual to ask if his majesty would please to hunt the next day; 'Yes, my lord,' replied the king, 'but I find with great grief, that I am not to have the satisfaction of your company.' This was the first intimation he had had of the loss of his place; I really think the contest with France and America might have been settled, though the buck-hounds had retained their old master.

I dined very pleasantly one day last week at the Bishop of Chester's. Johnson was there, and the

bishop was very desirous to draw him out, as he wished to show him off to some of the company who had never seen him. He begged me to sit next him at dinner, and to devote myself to making him talk. To this end, I consented to talk more than became me, and our stratagem succeeded. You would have enjoyed seeing him take me by the hand in the middle of dinner, and repeat with no small enthusiasm, many passages from the 'Fair Penitent,' &c. I urged him to take a *little* wine, he replied, 'I can't drink a *little*, child, therefore I never touch it. Abstinence is as easy to me, as *temperance* would be difficult.' He was very good-humoured and gay. One of the company happened to say a word about poetry, 'Hush, hush,' said he, 'it is dangerous to say a word about poetry before her; it is talking of the art of war before Hannibal. He continued his jokes, and lamented that I had not married Chatterton, that posterity might have seen a propagation of poets.

The metaphysical and philological Lord Monboddo breakfasted with us yesterday; he is such an extravagant adorer of the ancients, that he scarcely allows the English language to be capable of any excellence, still less the French. He has a hearty contempt for that people and their language. He said we moderns were entirely degenerated. I asked in what? 'In every thing,' was his answer: 'Men are not so tall as they were; women are not so handsome as they were; nobody can now write a long period; every thing dwindles.' I ventured to say that though long periods were fine in oratory

and declamation, yet that was not the language of passion. He insisted that it was. I defended my opinion by many passages from Shakspeare, among others, those broken bursts of passion in Constance, 'Gone to be married!' 'Gone to swear a truce!' 'False blood with false blood joined!' Again, 'My name is Constance, I am Geoffrey's wife— Young Arthur is my son, and he is slain.' We then resumed our old quarrel about the slave trade. He advocates slavery upon principle. I asked him how he could vindicate such an enormity. He owned it was because Plutarch justified it. Among much just thinking and some taste, especially in his valuable third volume on the 'Origin and Progress of Language,' he entertains some opinions so absurd, that they would hardly be credible, if he did not deliver them himself, both in writing and conversation, with a gravity which shows that he is in earnest, but which makes the hearer feel, that 'to be grave exceeds all power of face.' He is so wedded to system, that as Lord Barrington said to me the other day, rather than sacrifice his favourite opinion, that men were born with tails, he would be contented to wear one himself.

Hampton, 1782.

The other morning the captain of one of Commodore Johnson's Dutch prizes breakfasted at Sir Charles Middleton's, and related the following little anecdote. One day he went out of his own ship, to dine on board another. While he was there a storm arose, which in a short time, made an entire wreck

of his own ship, to which it was impossible for him to return. He had left on board two little boys, one four, the other five years old, under the care of a poor black servant. The people struggled to get out of the sinking ship into a large boat, and the poor black took his two little children, and having tied them into a bag, and put in a little pot of sweetmeats for them, slung them across his shoulder, and put them into the boat. The boat by this time was quite full: the black was stepping into it himself, but was told by the master there was no room for him, so that either he or the children must perish, for the weight of both would sink the boat. The exalted heroic negro did not hesitate a moment. Very well, said he, give my duty to my master, and tell him I beg pardon for all my faults. And then—guess the rest—plunged to the bottom never to rise again, till the sea shall give up her dead. I told it the other day to Lord Monboddo, who fairly burst into tears. The greatest lady in this land wants me to make an elegy of it, but it is above poetry. Did I tell you I breakfasted at Lord Barrington's. I am now in love with all the four brothers of that noble family. I think the Peer as agreeable as any of them, always excepting the Bishop, however, whose conversation that morning was, as it always is, instructive and delightful. In the evening, I went to a small party where Lord Stormont made the chief figure among the male talkers. Mrs. Crewe looked beautifully, and Lady Susan talked *wittily*. That I talked *prudently* you will allow, when I tell you that I caught myself in

an invective against the new ministry, which I wisely thought proper to address to Lady Charlotte Wentworth, forgetting at the moment that she was Lord Rockingham's sister.

Lord Pembroke came in laughing; I asked what diverted him, he told me he had met George Selwyn, who found himself very much annoyed in the street with chimney-sweeping boys. They were very clamorous; surrounded, daubed, and persecuted him; in short, would not let him go till they had forced money from him; at length he made them a low bow and cried, 'Gentlemen, I have often heard of the *Majesty* of the people, and I presume your highnesses are in court mourning.'

From Mrs. Kennicott to Miss H. More.

1782.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Just as I received your letter, we were setting out for Dr. Kennicott's living in Cornwall, and while we were there, we pleased ourselves with the hope of seeing you as we came back; but the parliament was dissolved, and our schemes were dissolved with it.

A thousand thanks to you for the heartiness with which you rejoice in our joy. Dr. Kennicott finished his Bible at the end of July. I wish you had been at the jubilee we held at the conclusion of it; for Miss Adams and I displayed so much genius upon the occasion, that I verily believe you could not have helped celebrating it. Our Pembroke friends

are just returned, and if they knew I was writing, would send some civil things.

"I would not have you for the future make yourself so sure of my not exposing such of your opinions, as you are pleased to say many of your correspondents would style *methodistical*;—a bugbear word, very ingeniously introduced, to frighten people from expressing those sentiments which they ought both to cherish and avow. You will, I hope, always find yourself greatly superior to such fears; for I consider those persons as having the happy power of doing the most essential service to the cause of religion, who, with taste to enjoy the harmless pleasures of this world, ever appear to hold it in due subordination to the next; and who, with talent to admire the wit of profane learning, manifest upon all proper occasions, that sacred studies form their chief delight.

I long to see all the fine things you have made. How unequally are talents distributed in this world! That you should be able to write such verses, knit such stockings, and make such aprons! I envy you only for the two last, which would be much more useful accomplishments to me than to you.

Our good Dean[1] is as difficult of access as the Grand Seignior, unless his friends are sick, or in distress, or the young men want his advice, and then his time seems to be at the service of every one who can be benefited by it. Give my best love to Mrs. Garrick. Your's, in all gratitude and affection,

A. KENNICOTT.

[1] Dr. Jackson, Dean of Christchurch.

CHAPTER III.

MISS HANNAH MORE quitted Mrs. Garrick's in the June of this year, 1782, and paid a visit to Dr. and Mrs. Kennicott at Oxford in her way to Bristol. We will extract two or three paragraphs of the letters she wrote from thence.

Oxford, June 13, 1782.

Who do you think is my principal Cicerone at Oxford? Only Dr. Johnson! and we do so gallant it about. You cannot imagine with what delight he showed me every part of his own College, (Pembroke) nor how rejoiced Henderson looked, to make one in the party. Dr. Adams, the master of Pembroke, had contrived a very pretty piece of gallantry. We spent the day and evening at his house. After dinner Johnson begged to conduct me to see the College, for he would let no one show it me but himself,—'This was my room; this Shenstone's.'—Then after pointing out all the rooms of the poets who had been of his college, 'In short,' said he, 'we were a nest of singing-birds.'—'Here

'we walked, there we played at cricket.' He ran over with pleasure the history of the juvenile days he passed there. When he came into the common room, we spied a fine large print of Johnson, framed and hung up that very morning, with this motto; '*And is not Johnson ours, himself a host.*' Under which stared you in the face, 'From *Miss More's* '*Sensibility!*' This little incident amused us;—but alas! Johnson looks very ill indeed—spiritless and wan. However, he made an effort to be cheerful, and I exerted myself much to make him so.

Oxford, 1782.

We are just setting off to spend a day or two at the Bishop of Landaff's,[1] near Wallingford. But first I must tell you I am engaged to dine on my return with the learned Dr. Edwards of Jesus College, to meet Dr. Johnson, Thomas Warton, and whatever else is most learned and famous in this university.

Oxford, Friday.

We had a delectable visit at the Bishop's. It is a paradise, and they are meet inhabitants for it. I have hardly time to say a word, we have such an inundation of company. There are in the next room three Canons, three *Heads*, three Ladies, one Dean, one Student, and *one* Professor. I got your letter with those of the French Academicians enclosed. So I am to send them the history of my life! *I think I had better cut it out of the*

[1] Dr. Barrington.

European Magazine, or get Mrs. —— to write it; in their hands all my sins will make a flaming figure.[1]

It was on her return from this visit at Dr. Kennicott's, that she wrote the humorous epistle to her late hostess, which I have ventured to introduce, as a satire on a practice which at that time had begun to prevail,—having been in a great measure introduced by the black letter, or Chattertonian controversy,—of writing books, the bulk of which consisted of notes, with only a line or two of text at the top of each page. The appellations on which this mock etymological investigation was founded, allude to a little playful whim which chanced to occur in their hours of complete relaxation at Dr. Kennicott's. What gave rise to the joke it is as impossible as it is immaterial to explain; but the party, it seems, had each adopted the name of some animal: Dr. K. was the elephant; Mrs. K. dromedary; Miss Adams, antelope; and Miss More, rhinoceros. We are not concerned to establish the wisdom of this proceeding, but let those only charge her with folly who, having purchased an equal right to trifle, have less frequently abused the privilege.

[1] That the reader may understand the allusion in the above letter, it is necessary to inform him that a few months before, the Academy of Arts, Sciences, and Belles Lettres at Rouen, had done Miss More the honour of electing her one of their members. She kept up an occasional correspondence with this academy till near the time of the French Revolution.

Hampton, Dec. 24, 1782.

"DEAR DROMY,[1]

Pray send word if *Ante*[2] is come, and also how *Ele*[3] does, to your very affectionate

RHYNEY.[4]

Notes on the above epistle, by a commentator of the latter end of the nineteenth century.

This epistle is all that is come down to us of this voluminous author, and is probably the only thing she ever wrote that was worth preserving, or which might reasonably expect to reach posterity. Her name is only presented to us in some beautiful hendecasyllables written by the best Latin poet of his time.—(*Bishop Lowth.*)

Note.[1]

Dromy.—From the termination of this address, it seems to have been written to a woman, though there is no internal evidence to support this hypothesis. The best critics are much puzzled about the orthography of this abbreviation. Wartonius, and other skilful etymologists, contend that it ought to be spelt *Drummy*, being addressed to a lady who was probably fond of warlike instruments, and who had a singular predilection for a *canon*.[1] Drummy, say they, was a tender diminutive of drum, as the best authors in their more familiar writings now begin to use *gunny* for *gun*. But *Hurdius*, a contemporary

[1] Dr. Kennicott, Canon of Christ Church.

critic, contends with more probability that it ought to be written *Drome*, from Hippodrome: a learned leech[1] and elegant bard of Bath, having left it upon record that this lady spent much of her time at the riding-school, being a very exquisite judge of horsemanship. *Colmanus* and *Horatius Strawberriensis* insist that it ought to be written *Dromo*, in reference to the Dromo Lorarius of the latin dramatist.

Note.[2]

Ante.—Scaliger 3d says, this name simply signifies the appellation of uncle's wife, and ought to be written *Aunte*. But here again are various readings. Philologists of yet greater name affirm that it was meant to designate *pre-eminence*, and therefore ought to be written *ante*, before, from the Latin; a language now pretty well forgotten, though the authors who wrote in it are still preserved in French translations. The younger Madame Dacier insists that this lady was against all men, and that it ought to be spelt *anti:* but this Kennicottus, a Rabbi of recondite learning, with much critical wrath vehemently contradicts; affirming it to have been impossible she could have been against all mankind, whom all mankind admired. He adds that *ante* is for *antelope*, and is emblematically used to express an elegant and slender animal; or that it is an elongation of *ant*, the emblem of virtuous citizenship.

[1] Dr. Harrington.

Note [3]

Ele.—Here criticism is confounded, and etymology is swallowed up in the boundless ocean of conjecture. Some have pretended that it should be written E. L. A. which are the initials of *elegant* and *learned antiquary*. The following flight of an hardy imagination is proposed: the profound mythologist [1] (of whom a great female critic has said, 'That he was born in all ages and lived in all countries,') has proved that the poems of Rowley were really *ancient;* the slashing *Tyrwhittius* has proved with equal certainty that they are *modern;* while a *right lernede clerke* [2] has no less demonstrably proved that they were not *written at all.* These opposite opinions seem all as clear as any proposition in Euclid; yet as the principal of these poems is called the tragedy of *Ella,* may not the *Ele* mentioned in this epistle be, by a small corruption, the famous *Ella,* Governor of Bristol Castle? and so here comes in a fourth hypothesis, that he himself was indubitably the author of these controverted poems.

Note [4]

Rhyney.—Or as some read it Rhyny. This is doubtless the name of the author of this admired and valuable epistle, which has afforded such rich materials to modern criticism: yet there are not wanting those who controvert this plain fact. Some refer this name to the geographical relation between the author and the place of her birth, and conclude

[1] Mr. Bryant. [2] Dr. Heberden.

that she was born on the banks of the Rhine; a bold and happy metonymy; as we say, Ithacus, and the Pylian, for Ulyssus and Nestor. Her having been in the house of a very amiable German, at the time of her writing this famous epistle, confirms this opinion. Others who assert that in her youth she had been addicted to poetry, think with more reason that *Rhyny* may be derived from *Rhyno*, an old provincial term for money; there having been in all ages a beautiful antithesis between *poetry* and *pence*,

She went to Bristol as usual, and returned in the latter end of the year to Mrs. Garrick and Hampton.

Hampton, Dec. 1782.

Never was such delicious weather! I passed two hours in the garden the other day as if it had been April, with my friend Mr. Brown.[1] I took a very agreeable lecture from him in his art, and he promised to give me taste by inoculation. He illustrates every thing he says about gardening by some literary or grammatical allusion. He told me he compared his art to literary composition. Now *there*, said he, pointing his finger, I make a comma, and there pointing to another spot where a more decided turn is proper, I make a colon: at another part (where an interruption is desirable to break the view) a parenthesis—now a full stop, and then I begin another subject.

[1] Capability Brown.

From Mrs. Montagu to is s H. More.

Bath, 1782.

DEAR MADAM,

The only water drinkers of any use, importance, or merit in human life are your drinkers of Helicon. We who take our morning's draught at the Bath Pump, Tunbridge Wells, &c. &c. are condemned to idle sauntering. What may be *necessary* for an invalid, becomes a general mode; and rosy health, and youth, and strength, adopt our regimen; so that Bath is as much dedicated to the Syren idleness, as ever Paphos was to the Cyprian goddess. Sauntering Jack and idle Joan are the Bath characters: and the few moments an invalid might read or write are continually interrupted by visitants. Thus my dear madam, have I been prevented from making my acknowledgments for some most valuable presents I received from Dr. Stonehouse. I am afraid we are generally more intent on enjoying a benefit, than on showing our gratitude for it; which is usually a crime, but in the present case it was a virtue, so far as I dedicated the first hours I could command to reading the excellent pieces he sent me. I must intreat you to send me the doctor's direction. I cannot express to you the delight I enjoyed the day I spent with you all at Bristol. I have talked of nothing else; and I had this morning a letter from Mrs. Carter from Deal, congratulating me upon it, for I wrote her an account of it. If it were possible to feel any addition to my mortification at not

having your company here, it would be the not enjoying that of the friend,[1] of great extent of génius, and small dimensions of person, whom you so happily describe. I am of your opinion, that idleness is criminal in men of parts; but there are certain desultory geniuses which, like the bird of paradise, are destined to flutter in every region, and abide in none. They are pretty birds to be sure, but not so useful as the barn-door fowls, which get their food in the farm-yard, and leave an egg every day in return; the others only drop now and then a fine feather from their glittering wing, and plumy crest, which perhaps are picked up by the sedulous collector, and adorn his fancy-works.

My friend Mrs. Vesey set forward towards Ireland the day before I left town. It is always disagreeable to part with a friend who is going to any distance, but when the roaring ocean, the boisterous main intervenes, the separation is more solemn. She went off in tolerable spirits, but I think her health much impaired of late. I would fain persuade myself that the voyage and change of air may be of service to her constitution. As to Mr. —— he is so old and so young, so infirm and so strong, I know not what judgment to form of him. One day in a sick-bed, the next at the Opera or Pantheon; one hour in a fit of epilepsy, another in a fit of gallantry! A *cheerful* old age is a fine thing, a *gay* old age a very absurd one. However, it is the fashion of the times to confound all distinction of age, sex, and rank; no one

[1] John Henderson.

ever thinks of sustaining a certain character, unless it is one they have assumed at a masquerade.

I am charmed and I hope improved by Dr. Stonehouse's works: I shall send to London for some of them, in order to diffuse the benefit. I know your goodness to me will make you glad to hear I have been perfectly well ever since I passed the happy day at Bristol. I am ever, my dear madam,

Your most grateful and affectionate humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

From H. More to her sister Martha.

Hampton, Jan. 9, 1783.

It was so unusual for me to receive a letter two days following, that when Sally's came on Wednesday, I had so strong a presentiment of its contents, that I did not open it for a long time; but laid it down very deliberately, and went and did several things which I thought too well I should not be able to do after I had read it. Yet, notwithstanding all this preparation, I was just as much shocked at reading it as if I had expected nothing like it.[1] I could not get quite through it for many hours after: and yet there is no cause for grief, but much for joy, much cause to be thankful. And I am *very* thankful that he was spared to us so long—that he was removed when life began to grow a burthen to himself—that he did not survive his faculties—that

1 The death of her father.

he was not confined to the miseries of a sick bed—but above all, that his life was so exemplary, and his death so easy. I wished I had seen him. Yet that is a vain regret. I hope he did not inquire after me, or miss me. Mrs. Garrick was very much affected, as my father was a very great favourite of hers.

Hampton, Jan. 28, 1783.

Since my dear father's death, I have never yet had resolution to go out of doors, so much as to walk round the garden, in almost three weeks; but as the day is fine, I intend to get out when I have finished this scrawl.

Miss More appears to have remained in her usual deep retirement at Hampton, till March, when she removed with Mrs. Garrick for the spring, to the Adelphi.

London, March.

Another application for an Epitaph. I had rather write an hundred lines on any other subject, than ascribe virtues to people I did not know, or who are undeserving. I cannot do it. Pray give my compliments to all my friends, and tell them I hope none of them will die soon; but in case they should, I wish they would, instead of leaving me any thing, be so good as to insert a passage in their wills, that I am not to be asked to write their Epitaphs. My monumental wit is all disposed of, and I am sure I never can cobble up enough for

another inscription. I mentioned yesterday to Lady Spencer the idea of a print of the Maid of the Haystack. She says, by all means; it may be of great service, at least by keeping up the attention of people. I thought the peace was to put an end to all divisions and disturbances, but I think I never knew this town in such a state of anarchy and distraction. The disputes are not about peace or war, but who shall have power and place, both of which are lost as soon as obtained. Before you can pay your congratulations to your friends on their promotion, presto! pass! they are out again. Lord Falmouth told me he sat down with a most eager appetite to his soup and roast at eight in the morning, and several of the Lords had company to dinner at that hour after the house broke up. Miss Anna Maria Shipley formally presented to me the other day her future husband, Sir William Jones, and we had a great deal of conversation. He is a very amiable as well as learned man, and possesses more languages perhaps than any man in Europe. I send you a few stanzas which I wrote on the death of Lieutenant John Gwatkin, not in the spirit of an epitaph-writer, but with honest tears.

I.

Though peace at length her grateful ensign rears,
The muse *will* stain the olive with her tears;
For you the mournful maid sad vigils keeps,
Wives! Sisters! Mothers! 'tis for you she weeps.

II.

For you, in vain shall peace her reign restore;
She comes, but brings your buried joys no more,
Sons! Husbands! Mothers! lo, at one sad stroke,
Poor bleeding nature's softest bands are broke.

III.

Glory and conquest! names of mighty sound!
Where are your lenient balms in sorrow found?
Your beams, when fortune smiles, some joy impart,
But shed weak balsam on a broken heart.

IV.

Shall public honours dignify the brave,
Nor private sorrows fall on Virtue's grave?
Oh, gallant Youth! at thy lov'd memory fired,
The Muse laments that valour she admired.

V.

Though Glory bade thy bright Ambition rise,
Fond nature held thee in her tend'rest ties,
Each mild affection of the soul to prove,
Of filial feeling, and fraternal love.

VI.

While patriot zeal thy ardent bosom warmed,
The gentler arts of peace thy breast informed;
Tho' dauntless courage fix'd thy youthful mind,
Yet lettered elegance thy soul refined.

VII.

Tho' short thy period, glorious was thy race!
How fair a promise crowned that narrow space!
Oh! much lamented youth, be this thy praise,—
Who lives to virtue lives a length of days.

VIII.

Still let domestic anguish bear in mind,
Who dies with honour fills the task assigned,
Where short the span, designs for deeds shall tell,
And duties unperformed the account shall swell!

London, March 7, 1783.

I was yesterday at Mrs. Ord's, to start upon my career of friendship with Mr. Smelt. I inclose part of his letter to her, in which you will see that I have the honour to be in favour with this very

exalted character. You know he was preceptor to the Prince of Wales, under the direction of the Earl of Holderness, and as he would receive no settled appointment, he is distinguished by the high appellation of the king's friend. We had a pleasant interesting evening. I have known him for some years: he is an old acquaintance, but a new friend. Her party was small, as it was made on purpose to bring us together. I had Sir Joshua, Cambridge, and Mr. Smelt, all to myself; not badly off, you will say. On Friday evening, I was at a very fine party at Lady Rothes, where I found a great many of my friends,—Mrs. Montagu, Boscawen, Carter, Thrale, Burney, and Lady Dartrey; in short, it was remarked that there was not a woman in London, who has been distinguished for taste and literature, that was absent. The men were modest, and said they were abashed, the other sex made so strong a party.

I refused to go to-night with Lady Middleton and Mrs. Porteus, to hear Tessier read: for even if I had the least appetite for anything of that sort, I should certainly prefer being drawn into the stream, and going to see Mrs. Siddons, which I have also refused to do, though Lady Spencer took the pains to come yesterday to ask me to go with her. You know I have long withdrawn myself from the theatre. Lady Bathurst came by appointment, and made a very long and kind visit; she was quite happy, in hourly expectation of Lord Apsley, after a two years' absence in Germany and France. We dined the other day at Mrs.

Montagu's. Out of sixteen persons, there were not three English men or women. De Luc, the Swiss metaphysician and geologist, a man of great merit, and Madame la Fite, were all the foreigners I knew; but, my good stars placed Mr. Locke on one side of me; which was some consolation for having a prate-apace jackanapes of a Frenchman (a *bel esprit* though,) on the other. Mr. Locke never speaks but to instruct, in matters of taste, especially in the fine arts. In the evening we had a very strong reinforcement of blues. Mrs. Montagu inquires after you all.

London, 1783.

Did you hear of a woman of quality, an earl's daughter, perishing for want the other day, near Cavendish Square? The sad story is, that she had married an attorney, a bad man, and had several children; they all frequently experienced the want of a morsel of bread. Lady Jane grew extremely ill, and faint with hunger. An old nurse, who had never forsaken her mistress in her misfortunes, procured by some means a sixpence; Lady Jane sent her out to buy a cow-heel; the nurse brought it in, and carried a piece of it to her mistress: 'No,' said she, 'I feel myself dying—all relief is too late; and it would be cruel in me to rob the children of a morsel, by wasting it on one who must die,'—so saying, she expired. I leave you to make your own comments on this domestic tragedy, in a metropolis drowned in luxury. What will Sally say to side-dishes and third courses now?

Yesterday we dined at the Bishop of Salisbury's.[1] Dr. Heberden, Dr. and Mrs. Kennicott, Mythology Bryant, and Mrs. Carter. With Mr. Bryant I always have some delightful conversation; he is not only a very able, but a pious man, and has devoted his Pagan learning to truly Christian purposes. I spent the afternoon on Tuesday with Mrs. Delany and the Duchess of Portland. I think that charming duchess very much broken in her looks; and she is not likely to be cured by her son's being appointed premier to this distracted country. His ministry, I suppose, will be still shorter than his vice-royalty was. These labours and vicissitudes are the blessings of greatness. Even riches do not make rich. I should be glad to know what our friend Dr. Stonehouse would think of such new-fashioned doctrines as I have lately heard in a Charity Sermon on a Sunday, from a dignified ecclesiastic, and a popular one too, but I will not tell his name: he told the rich and great, that they ought to be extremely liberal in their charities, because they were happily *exempted* from the *severer virtues*. How do you like such a sentiment from a Christian teacher? What do you think Polycarp or Ignatius would say to it?

London, March 29, 1783.

I spent an evening lately with Lady Charlotte Wentworth. She had a very select little party, and they made me read to them;—poetry too! I

[1] Dr. Barrington.

defended myself as well as I could, but to my great regret, was forced to comply. Lady Charlotte has a great deal of general literature; and, what is far better, she is really a pious and well-informed Christian. Sunday I breakfasted at Sir Charles Middleton's, and we went with the Bishop of Chester afterwards, and heard him preach. They set me down as usual after church.

I thought Mrs. Garrick would have dropped with laughing, when I read in Sally's letters that you spent all your leisure in teaching the *governesses* to read and spell. It struck her fancy mightily. I am glad to hear such good tidings of Henderson. I hope he will begin to put his great parts to good use, and avoid the condemnation as well of the *buried*, as of the abused talent. I passed the whole evening at the Bishop of St. Asaph's in a very pleasant wrangle with Mr. Walpole about poets: he abusing all my favourites, and I all his: he reprobating Akenside, Thomson, and all my bards of the *blank song;* and I all his odes and lyrics. I told him (rather lightly I fear) that David had expressed my notion of the obscurity of lyric poetry, when he said, "I will utter my dark speech upon the harp." Sir William Jones (for the new judge is also knighted previous to his Indian voyage,) is gone down to prepare all things for his and his lady's accommodation. She is a little low at the thought that she is leaving all, perhaps for ever; but she goes with what she best loves,—an advantage with which few

women set out to India. They are to be married in a few days. We are to have one more evening together.

Hoole has just sent me his preface to his translation of Ariosto, which is coming out; an expensive present; since I can now do no less than subscribe for the whole work; and a guinea and a half for a translation of a book is dearish. Saturday I went to Mrs. Reynolds's, to meet Sir Joshua and Dr. Johnson: the latter is vastly recovered. Our conversation ran very much upon religious opinions, chiefly those of the Roman Catholics. He took the part of the Jesuits, and I declared myself a Jansenist. He was very angry because I quoted Boileau's bon mot upon the Jesuits, that they had lengthened the creed and shortened the decalogue; but I continued sturdily to vindicate my old friends of the Port Royal. On Tuesday I was at Mrs. Vesey's assembly, which was too full to be very pleasant. She dearly loves company; and as she is connected with almost every thing that is great in the good sense of the word, she is always sure to have too much. I inquired after the Shipleys, who had promised to meet us there, and was told they had just sent an excuse; for that Anna Maria and Sir William were at that moment in the act of marrying. They will be now completely banished, but as they will be banished together, they do not think it a hardship. May God bless them, and may his stupendous learning be sanctified! I went and sat the other morning with Dr. Johnson, who is still far from well. Our

conversation was very interesting: but so many people came in, that I began to feel foolish, and sneaked off. He has written some very pretty verses on his friend Levett, which he gave me, and which I will send you when I can. He was all kindness to me.

London, April 5, 1783.

On Saturday I dined at Apsley House, where there was a good deal of company. Lord Apsley has brought with him all the benefit to be derived from travelling; and has more vivacity and spirit than falls to the share of our modern young men of quality in general. Lord Bathurst entertained me a good deal, apart after dinner, with anecdotes of his godfather Lord Bolingbroke, of Pope, of his own father, and others; which, as they fell under his own eye, perhaps I could have learned from no other man living. He entirely exculpates Pope from an evil intention in printing the Patriot King; which excited Bolingbroke's hatred so much after Pope's death: though I do think it was a very unaccountable step.

I received your letter on Wednesday. I stole that day out of the fire as I may say, and staid at home, maugre several invitations. I had really dined out such a vast number of days, that I was quite weary, and was inflexible to all intreaty; indeed so much visiting does now begin to be very irksome, I go to so many places when I should rejoice to stay at home; but I consider, that this round of visiting will not last long; for I begin to

calculate that there is little more than a clear month between this and June.

London, May 5, 1783.

I went yesterday to hear the Bishop of Chester. That good man is under great affliction for the death of Dr. Stinton, his dearest friend through life. In the sermon there happened to be a passage which, among other losses, mentioned the death of a beloved companion; he was so much affected that his voice faltered, and he could not go on without the greatest difficulty. As most of the audience knew the circumstance, they were very much touched at it. Poor Ryland! from the time he absconded till he was apprehended, he continually sat with a razor in a prayer-book. Think what a state of mind, to have just conviction and faith enough to pray, and yet to be so desperately wretched, as to live with the instrument of self-murder continually in his hand. His bane and antidote were not so comfortable to him as Cato's were, for he had the misfortune to know better and to believe more.

Is it not very melancholy when you go to see our solitary mother? I endeavour to think of it as little as I can, but in spite of my endeavours it mixes with all my thoughts. Saturday we had a dinner at home, Mrs. Carter, Miss Hamilton, the Kennicotts, and Dr. Johnson. Poor Johnson exerted himself exceedingly; but he was very ill and looked so dreadfully, that it quite grieved me. He is more mild and complacent than he used to be. His sickness seems to have softened his mind, without

having at all weakened it. I was struck with the mild radiance of this setting sun. We had but a small party of such of his friends as we knew would be most agreeable to him, and as we were all very attentive, and paid him the homage he both expects and deserves, he was very communicative, and of course instructive and delightful in the highest degree.

London, May, 1783.

I dined one day last week in Dudley Street,[1] to celebrate the Viscount's[2] birth-day, who completed his twenty-fifth year. His mother told him she wanted to have him married, and advised him to fall in love: he said he should if he were with any young ladies in the country; but that he never could in London, for the women did not stand still long enough for a man to fall in love with them. The other day I divided between Lady Bathurst and Lady Charlotte Wentworth. The latter gave me a little packet she had just received from Madame le Cat, directed for me; it contained a pretty French snuff-box, on which is the tomb of Rousseau, in the isle of Poplars. I was invited last week to six or eight dinners or assemblies, but did not go to any of them. I intended to have sent this away last night, but Mr. Cambridge came in at tea, and sat gossipping and being agreeable till twelve; and I was so full of dactyls and spondees, that I quite forgot my letter. I was asked to meet the chemical

[1] Mrs. Boscawen's. [2] Viscount Falmouth.

and polemical Bishop Watson to-day at Mr. Cole's, but was engaged elsewhere.

The King and Queen have suffered infinitely from the loss of the sweet little prince, who was the darling of their hearts. I was charmed with an expression of the king's. 'Many people (said he) would regret they ever *had* so *sweet* a child, since they were forced to part with him: that is not my case. I am thankful to God for having graciously allowed me to enjoy such a creature for four years.' Yet his sorrow was very great.

London, May 22, 1783.

I have finished my campaign in town; we do not now appear to any body unless we meet them strolling in the streets. We dined one day last week at Mrs. Banister's, to meet the Bishop of Winchester and Mrs. North; there was a great deal of other company, among whom was Mr. Swinburne, the author of 'Travels to Spain, Sicily,' &c. One is always surprised to find the author of two or three great big burly quartos, a *little* genteel young man. He is modest and agreeable, not wise and heavy, like his books. The next morning I breakfasted with the Bishop of Chester and Mrs. Porteus, and we visited the tombs, and dwelt among the dust in Westminster Abbey. On Saturday, I wound up my town adventures, by dining and passing the evening with Mrs. Boscawen and a little snug party, consisting of the above-said bishop, the Coles, and the Duchess of Beaufort. Since that time, I have been inexorable to all invitations, though two rival

parties were strongly pressed upon me last night; one at Mr. Soame Jenyns's, and the other to meet the Barringtons at Bishop Porteus's. There was no way of getting off either, but by refusing both.

A visitor has just gone away quite chagrined that I am such a rigid Methodist that I cannot come to her assembly on Sunday, though she protests with great piety, that she *never has cards*, and that it is quite savage in me to think there can be any harm in a little agreeable music.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

London, May 23, 1783.

DEAR MADAM,

It sounds, I confess, very wicked and ill-natured to say that I am very glad you are so ingenious in tormenting yourself with the idea of a supposed transgression; but the truth is, I really am so; for although there certainly could not be much reason for giving yourself the smallest uneasiness, on account of an offence which you never committed, yet to that fortunate uneasiness I am indebted for a most obliging and agreeable note, to which otherwise I could have had no claim.

Be assured, that I set the highest value on this, and every other mark of your regard, and that it is with the greatest pleasure I obey your commands, in giving you this assurance under my own hand, which though it can send you nothing but a miserable scrawl, written in the midst of hurry and perpetual interruptions, yet has the merit of conveying

to you in these plain homely characters, nothing but plain homely truth. I should, perhaps, have been able to dress what I had to say in a better garb, had I waited, as you allowed me to do, till I was in the country, and quiet, and at leisure. But when, alas! will this be? Will it ever happen (says your parenthesis) on this side heaven? Those comforts are, I confess, the wish, the almost only secular and ardent wish, of my heart. But it is not always fit that secular wishes should be gratified: it is, perhaps, the will of heaven that mine should not, and that labour and business should be the destiny of my whole life. If Providence has thus decreed, I submit, as I ought to do with cheerfulness, and I am truly thankful for the many other blessings I already enjoy. Among these, I give the first place to the affection and esteem of many excellent persons whom I have the happiness to call my friends. If in this number I may be allowed to rank Miss Hannah More, it will contribute not a little to lighten my approaching fatigue; and wherever I am, whether on the mountains of Cumberland, on the lakes of Lancashire, or at Chester, at London, or at Hunton, it will always be matter of triumph and of consolation to me that I am permitted to subscribe myself

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

B. CHESTER.

From Hannah More to her Sister.

Hampton, May 29, 1783.

We have been at Hampton near a week. I am here to-night by myself. Mrs. Garrick is gone to town. I begged to stay behind, both because I have a great deal of business to do, and because I hate London when I have nothing to do, and nobody to see there; and having taken my leave once, I do not like to begin again. Before I left London, I spent a whole morning with Mrs. Delany. She gave me a great treat—the reading of all Dean Swift's letters, written to herself. She likewise gave me my choice of one to bring away for your book of autographs. I had the modesty to choose the shortest, and she had the modesty to oppose it, because there was so much to her praise in it; but if that were to be an objection, there would not be one for you!

Did I tell you that the Bishop of Chester's Sermons were out of print in eight days? I hope the age is not so bad as we took it to be; and yet it cannot be very good neither, when the strawberries at Lady Stormont's breakfast last Saturday morning cost one hundred and fifty pounds.

I am tired of writing several letters, and of reading the Lives of the Reformers, and of trimming a fine gauze handkerchief; and now I am going to close the day with a thick quarto of Dr. Beattie's metaphysics.

To her Sister.

Hampton, 1783.

As I do not go to Ranelagh, nor the play, nor the opera, nor sup at Charles Fox's, nor play at Brooke's, nor bet at Newmarket, I have not seen that worthy branch of the house of Bourbon, the Duke de Chartres. I never heard of such a low, vulgar, vicious fellow. His character is—

Poltron sur mer,
Escroc sur terre,
Et vaut rien partout.

I have read Colman's 'Ars Poetica:' he is much too negligent a versifier, but easy and elegant. I believe I forgot to mention Mrs. Vesey's pleasant Tuesday parties to you. It is a select society, which meets at her house every other Tuesday, and of which I am invited to be an unworthy member. It assembles on the day on which the Turk's Head Club dine together. In the evening they all meet at Mrs. Vesey's, with the addition of such other company as it is difficult to find elsewhere. Last Tuesday we met; and Mr. Langton and Mr. Walpole were added to the society, for the first time this winter. I rejoiced to find them again, for they are two of the very pleasantest men 'that e'er my conversation coped withal.' The latter told me a hundred pleasant stories of his father and the *then* court.

Alas! when will the distractions of this land be healed! Nothing but a national judgment can

bring us to our senses. Surely the miseries which have visited the devoted Calabrians might open our eyes, and show us all that our evils are either imaginary, or of our own bringing on. War, gambling, and luxury, are none of them inflictions from heaven.

An arrangement of the ministry seems to be as far off as ever, and I am tired of writing, hearing, and undesigningly circulating untruths on this undecided subject. The news that was true at the beginning of one's page, proves false before one has reached the bottom, and one can hardly catch, ere it falls, the arrangement of the minute.

I wish you could see Hampton at this moment; I think there never was greater perfection of beauty; so clean, so green, so flowery, so bowery! We dined the other day at Strawberry Hill, and passed as delightful a day, as elegant literature, high breeding, and lively wit can afford. As I was the greatest stranger, Mr. Walpole devoted himself to my amusement with great politeness, but I have so little of virtû and antiquarianism about me that I really felt myself quite unworthy of all the trouble he took for me.

Very shortly after Miss H. More's return to Bristol, in June, 1783, she received a summons from her friend Mrs. Kennicott, at Oxford, who was anxious for her assistance and consolation under the very afflicting event of Dr. Kennicott's being attacked with a dangerous illness.

To her Sister.

Oxford, August 19, 1783.

My last will have prepared you to expect the contents of this letter. Dear Dr. Kennicott expired yesterday, about four o'clock in the afternoon. I saw him breathe his last. The servants, though there were six of them, were afraid to stay in the room without me. I got her away from him down stairs, and for the last two hours ran continually up and down, from the afflicted wife to the expiring husband, she all the time knowing he was in the last agonies. Yet, when I came to break it to her, she bore it with the utmost fortitude. She has been very composed ever since; indeed she is a true Christian heroine. The Dean of Christchurch has just been to say that in a quarter of an hour the great bell is to toll. I have told her of it, and she is now looking out a book for me to read during that time.

Adieu. I hear the bell—my task begins. [1]

[1] Mrs. Hannah More used to repeat, from her friend, Mrs. Kennicott, a little anecdote of Dr. Kennicott, which strikingly proves how much the love of the sacred volume grows with its perusal. During the time that he was employed on his Polyglot Bible, it was her constant office, in their daily airings, to read to him those different portions to which his immediate attention was called. When preparing for their ride, the day after this great work was completed, upon her asking him what book she should *now* take, 'Oh,' exclaimed he, 'let us begin the Bible.'

Oxford, August 23, 1783.

My excellent friend was buried on Thursday afternoon, in Christchurch, close to Bishop Berkeley. Mrs. Kennicott made it a point that I should go to see this last sad office performed. I objected to leaving her alone for so long a time, but her strength of mind overruled this objection. The choir service was awful, almost beyond bearing: and the dean[1] read the prayers in a manner most solemn and impressive. I shall stay while I have any chance of being useful to the afflicted widow. Thus closed a life, the last thirty years of which were honourably spent in collating the Hebrew Scriptures. One now remembers, with peculiar pleasure, that, among other disinterested actions, he resigned a valuable living, because his learned occupation would not allow him to reside upon it.

What substantial comfort and satisfaction must not the testimony which our departed friend was enabled to bear to the truth of the Holy Scriptures, afford to those who lean upon them as the only anchor of the soul. When Dr. K. had an audience of the king to present his work, his majesty asked him, What upon the whole had been the result of his laborious and learned investigation? To which he replied, that he had found some grammatical errors, and many variations, in the different texts; but not one which, in the smallest degree, affected any article of faith or practice.

[1] Dr. Jackson.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. E. Carter.

Christ Church, Oxford, 1783.

A thousand thanks, my dear Mrs. Carter, both from Mrs. Kennicott and myself, for your very obliging and friendly inquiries. I did not receive your letter till Friday, and yesterday there was no post, or I should have testified our acknowledgments sooner. We have, indeed, had a most distressful and affecting scene. I have lost a most excellent friend, and poor Mrs. Kennicott the best of husbands. His illness was lingering, but not judged to be hopeless till within a few days before we lost him. I saw him breathe his last; and you, my dear friend, who know my weakness of mind, and the agitation of spirits to which I am subject, will feel for my situation, and for what I endured when I had to convey to her the news of his death; for I had forced her out of the room some hours before. But her fortitude made me ashamed of myself. I never saw courage so great, grounded upon principles so good. She feels the sincerest sorrow, but without any mixture of weakness; and she yields the most lively proof that the divine consolations are, indeed, neither *few nor small.* She is preparing, with the utmost composure, to leave this fine residence, so suitable to her taste and to her regular and orderly mind; for she is formed for the sober dignity of academical life; but she seems quite indifferent to all these outward things; and

that part of the change which would occupy the hearts of some women, she does not even think of. I intend staying with her about another week, soon after which she proposes to leave this place.

I have to thank you, my dear madam, for a delightful letter which I received at Bristol, from whence I was called away hither just as I was about to answer it, and to condole with you on the misfortunes Mr. Carter had sustained. Poor Dr. Wheeler too! but don't you pity the excellent Bishop of London? He sent off an express as soon as his daughter died, to hasten Dr. Wheeler up, to be with and console him: an express from the doctor's sister, to say he was dead, met the bishop's messenger on the road. Such is this world, and so the fashion of it passes away!

We are vastly busy, packing, selling, writing, &c.; and, perhaps, it is good for poor Mrs. Kennicott that she is not allowed a quiet enjoyment of her grief. She desires her kindest compliments to you, and bids me say that she feels very sensibly your goodness to her.

Adieu, my dear madam. I am most faithfully and affectionately yours,

H. More.

The following letters will introduce to the reader one of Miss Hannah More's most interesting, amiable, and intelligent correspondents.

Miss H. More to William W. Pepys, Esq.[1]

Bristol, July 24.

I have been always intending to answer your letter when I could find a handsome occasion; and such an occasion I have now *found* or *made*. *Le voici.*

I have been filling up the vacant hours of my convalescence in scribbling a parcel of idle verses,[2] with which I hope to divert our dear Mrs. Vesey, in her banishment from London. But as I wish to puzzle her (and right easy is the task), I would not send them directly from hence, as the post-mark would have been at once a *coup de lumière*. I have one frank to you, and one to Miss Hamilton, neither of which will hold the *whole*, so I send half to you, and the other half to her by the same post, but I have been wicked enough to divide them in such a manner, that neither part will make sense without the other. *She* is likewise directed not to open *hers* till you call upon her, and I am malicious enough to divert myself with the idea that one or other of you will probably be out of town, and in that case there will be a fine philosophical call on you to suspend your curiosity.

[1] Afterwards Sir W. W. Pepys.

[2] 'The Bas Bleu.'

The only way I had to secure your honesty, was to put it out of your power to cheat, by making it useless to break open the enclosed till you get to Miss H. I wish you to read it to *her;* and then to read it to yourself, *critically,* 'with all the malice of a friend.' I wish I could have as firm a reliance on your sincerity as I have upon your taste; but you gave me at Hampton one proof that you *can* be sincere, and here is a fresh demand upon you for *farther* proofs.

After having made such corrections as you see proper, you will send the verses off to Mrs. V. without the smallest intimation from whence they come. At the same time, on another scrap of paper you will mark down for me, what alterations you have made, that I may insert them in my copy. I intended only a few lines, but it grew into length, maugre all my endeavours, as slight and worthless things have a wonderful facility in growing. In vain did I cut off lines in one part; like the heads of the monster, 'one would bourgeon where another fell.' Do not make the least scruple of striking out any improper, or *singularly* flimsy couplet.

I write to Mrs. V. so seldom, and her sight is so indifferent, that I do not think she will recollect my hand-writing.

This scrawl, you will allow, contains nearly as much egotism as one of Mr. Maty's Reviews. When you see the scrape you are brought into by that (to you) fatal frankness about the vases at Hampton, you will be apt to regret that *escape* of honesty, for without it you would not have had this torment.

I am in such raptures with *Les Jardins,* by L'Abbé de L'Isle, which I have just read, for the first time, that I am half tempted to revoke the insolent things I have been saying all my life, against almost all French poetry, except Boileau's. Pray how do you like Les Jardins?

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Wimpole Street, July 29, 1783.

Very clever, witty, pleasant, and playful; I like it excessively, and have read it over and over again with fresh pleasure. By great good luck your ingenious malice was disappointed, and instead of plaguing us both, you procured us a very great and unexpected pleasure in reading it over together on Monday, in Wimpole Street. I am at a loss to point out what I liked best in it, as it is *full* of the best humoured wit and most elegant compliment; but what made the greatest impression on my fancy was that admirable turn of giving Mrs. Vesey the preference to any philosopher who should *square* the *circle.* I am sure every body will say of that as Lord Mount Edgecumbe said of Mrs. W.'s Epigram, 'That he was sure he had made it himself but had forgotten it.' To prevent the possibility of Mrs. Vesey's knowing the hand, Mrs. Pepys transcribed it, and sent her the copy. Miss Hamilton and I have had a long piece of casuistry together; I say, that as I had no injunction against giving a copy, I see no reason why I might not delight Mrs. Montagu or Mrs. Wal-

singham, and the chosen few now at Burleigh with a sight of it; but Miss H. has raised in me fresh scruples of conscience; and, much as I should like to give Mrs. Walsingham and her friend pleasure, I dread so much giving you any cause of complaint, that I have not ventured to do it.

As to suggesting any corrections, I do assure you, in sober sadness, that I am the very worst fellow in the world to apply to; for either I am so delighted with a composition as not to be able (for a long time at least) to consider it critically, or else I take so little pleasure in it, as not to think it worth the pains of criticism. Which of the two is the case with me at present, I leave you to guess.

We were doubtful whether, as you had mentioned Cato, Hortensius, Catiline, Lentulus, and Roscius, from some resemblance of *character*, not of *name*, whether, I say, the calling him afterwards *Horace*, is quite of a piece with the idea which suggested the other names? But this I mention, rather to give you the most *decisive* proof of my integrity, than for any other reason, because it is a line the whole of which I like best as it stands. Your never-failing gratitude in first mentioning Roscius is delightful; and, added to a *thousand* other traits in it, serve greatly to increase the regard and admiration of your highly honoured and obliged

LÆLIUS.

Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, August 4, 1783.

I never was guilty of over-refinement in my life, but it failed to answer the end. Here is Miss Hamilton *so* jealous, that *she* was forbidden to take a copy, and that no such bargain was made with *you!* I protest I thought I was doing the most delicate thing in the world, in not seeming to imagine you would want one. I acted in conformity to a favourite old couplet of mine,

> Perhaps to be forbid may tempt one
> To wish for what one never dreamt on.

I knew well that Miss H. would eagerly fall on anything in which *rhyme* or *I* was concerned; but that *you* should gravely think of sitting down to copy nineteen pages of nonsense verses, I confess I was too modest to conjecture: and so I have written to Miss H. in answer to her philippic against my supposed partiality.

Your criticisms are perfectly just. We must banish *Horace.* I confess I had been so much in the habit of seeing him and *Lælius* together, that they presented themselves to my mind spontaneously. I desire you will elect a new colleague. What say you to Atticus? A learned, amiable, and tall friend of yours will be no bad representative of him. 'The *urn* of Belvidere,' on revision, I do not like; urn is a pretty word, and its prettiness seduced me; but it does not convey the mean-

ing; it rather gives the idea of a lover weeping over the ashes of a departed mistress. I propose to read it thus :—

> Save when he steals to drop a tear,
> Frequent, o'er sad Calista's bier,
> Or mourn the wrongs of Belvidere.

I do not like triplets though, and would never use them but in very light compositions.

In the third line from the last, for *wisdom* read *genius*. There are several other tautologies which I beg you to correct.

You seemed so resolved to *take* the leave I did not mean to *give*, that I suppose I should now get nothing by withholding it but the heaviest charge of affectation. I am, however, very serious, and very unaffected, when I enjoin you to confine the copies you give to Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Walsingham, with strict injunctions to them not to give them away. I have a terror of newspapers, from which I have found, by sad experience, that no mediocrity can secure one: so no safety even for me.

I do confess I should have been sadly mortified had I been so bad a painter, that you had not known all my Romans. But I dare say, like other artists, I should have comforted myself that the defect was in the eye of the judges, rather than my own pencil.

The *Guardian* I was so anxious to know your opinion about, is the fortieth of the first volume. I have *some* reason to think I am in the wrong, as I have all the world against me: but the whole criti-

cism appears to me a burlesque. That a writer of so pure a taste could be in earnest, when he talks of the elegance of Diggon Davy, and exalts all that trash of Phillips's, whose simplicity is silliness, I cannot bring myself to believe. But when he says that *Hobbinol* and *Lobbin* are names agreeable to the delicacy of an English ear, *j'y perds mon Latin.*

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Tunbridge Wells, August 13, 1783.

Thanks for your licence, but a fig for your restrictions; though I certainly shall not transgress them without your leave. But when you must know that not only every reading and writing Miss at Margate has got a copy of them, but that the copies of them are, by this time, dispersed over every part of the kingdom, to all their correspondents, what possible reason could there be to lay me or any of your friends under any restraint? The company in which you placed me did me so much honour, that I am extremely unwilling to part with my colleague, but I agree with you that if I *must* be separated from him, you could not have thought of a better substitute. However I am desirous of keeping *him* if I can, though it should put you to the expense of a triplet, for the sake of hooking them both in. You would have been entertained with Miss Hamilton's eager curiosity to discover who Lælius was. She did not know my passion for good society, (though I think she must have discovered somewhat of it at Hampton) and therefore I had a fine oppor-

tunity of teazing her, by telling her that Lælius had had the happiness of conversing with her—was much her admirer, &c. *Atticus* is an admirable name for Langton; both in respect of his moderation and impartiality about political questions, and also because he is, and wishes to be, distinguished for his *Greek* literature: but you must, if you can, make a trio of us.

I have read the poem over twenty times, and really think it a composition of first-rate merit of its kind. As you have quite established your character with me for that most rare indication of a great mind, the hearing, without offence, any line or word pointed out for alteration, I have run the risk of putting down, as it occurred, any thing that in the least struck me as capable of being improved. If you find you begin to dislike me for it, repent of the sensation as soon as you can, and reinstate me in your favour by recollecting the assurance which I gave you, that you are almost the only person with whom I ever have been hardy enough to try the experiment.

If they do not bring dinner I shall never leave off writing, because it puts me so much in mind of *talking* to you; and you recollect that I was not easily tired of *that*. I do not venture to recommend Blair's Lectures, because I have begun only the second volume, and have not made much progress in *that;* but as far as relates to poetry, I think you will be pleased with him; except that after saying, in the second volume, page 254, that in point of poetical fire and original genius, *Milton*

and Shakspeare are inferior to no poets in any age; he says, in page 257, that in epic poetry, Homer and Virgil, to this day, stand not within reach by many degrees of any rival. Does not this seem a little like contradiction? At least is it not rather too hard upon Milton?

'Adieu, ever yours,

W. W. PEPYS.

From the same to the same.

Tunbridge Wells, September 21, 1783.

Though I am much afraid that I frightened you by the length of my last letter (for I will not do you so much injustice as to think that I disgusted you by the freedom of my remarks,) yet as our friend Mrs. Boscawen tells me that she is going to write to you in a cover, and offers me a place in it if I have any thing to say, I cannot resist the temptation of thanking you for those exquisitely beautiful lines upon Attention, which you were so good as to send by Miss Hamilton, and which make such an admirable conclusion to the charming 'Bas Bleu:'—

> 'Mute Angel! yes, thy looks dispense
> The silence of intelligence.'

are beyond all praise, and form such a picture, with the addition of the two next lines, that as soon as I see Mrs. Walsingham, I shall request of her to paint Attention from your beautiful design. I have had the greatest success in disseminating your fame

among some other good judges, at this place, to whom I have read the 'Bas Bleu' with uncommon effect; and every creature, whose opinion was worth having, has agreed with me in thinking it a performance of very extraordinary merit. Lady D—— is charmed with it; and as she had not seen the lines upon Attention, I thought myself very fortunate in being the first to communicate them to her.

I am sorry to hear from Mrs. Boscawen that you have of late been engaged in such a melancholy scene at Oxford: but as I begin to take an interest (and that rather a warm one) in whatever you do, I was pleased to hear of your being engaged in one of the most generous, because the most painful acts of friendship. I know a little of Mrs. Kennicott, but had so much regard for her poor brother, that I was very glad to hear that she had the consolation of such a friend in her affliction. Your having been engaged in such scenes, is more than a sufficient reason with me for your not having made use of the cover I had the effrontery to send you. Do tell me all that you can about yourself, though you are the worst person in the world to apply to for that intelligence.

Pray come either to London or near it, before the annual return of the vertigo with which every body is infected after the birthday, and give me an opportunity of telling you as soon as may be, in person, how much

I am yours,

W. W. Pepys.

From the same to the same.

Tunbridge Wells, October 10, 1783.

Our letters crossed each other on the road, but by no means at equal distance from us, for no sooner had Mrs. Boscawen carried off my letter in her chaise, than I was favoured with your's by one of those gentlemen who Madame Savigné observes are so obliging as 'se faire crotter jusqu'aux yeux,' to keep up the intercourse of friends at a distance. I desire you will not take the trouble of transcribing the 'Bas Bleu,' as I promise myself a very pleasant hour or two in looking it over together with you as soon as we can meet; and transcribing must be to you a dreadful task! I wish I knew when to expect you. You lose the most sociable month in London by not coming till after Christmas. Exclusively of the pleasure I have received from the Bas Bleu, you cannot imagine the degree of *consequence* it has given me with some very agreeable people here, and how much I have risen in their estimation by telling them that *I* was the first person who saw it, and that *I* would read it to them, but that no copy of it could possibly be given.

I think it most probable that I shall stay here till the 5th of November, when, alas! I must return to the wrangling of lawyers; and exchange my exhilarating rides, and luxurious reading, for noise and sin, seacoal and parchment; *en attendant*, I feel quite overflowing with gratitude for

the happiness I have enjoyed here for ten weeks. My family and self are well, and as yet protected from all those calamities which 'flesh is heir to.' Though I love your letters as the next best thing to your company, yet I do beseech you not to write unless you should happen to be in the humour for it.

Yours ever,
W. W. PEPYS.

We pass over the two or three months which Miss H. More spent at Hampton this winter, in unvaried tranquillity, till we find her in the ensuing spring writing from the Adelphi to her sister.

Adelphi, March 8, 1784.

I have been in town some days, but had not time to write before, because, as the Duchess of Gordon told the Queen, 'tis nothing but fruz, fruz, all day, and rap, rap, all *neet*.' Being here alone, I have dined out almost every day. This total change of scene, from the quiet, reading, contemplative life I have been so much used to, gave me headaches at first; but now that I am a little seasoned to the hot rooms, I am very well again. One of my engagements was to the Bishop of Chester's. It was a very pleasant party.

Mr. and Mrs. Soame Jenyns, gay, gallant, and young as ever, are really delectable to behold; so fond of each other, and so free from characteristic infirmities. I do not know such another pair. I think they make up between them about 165 years.

There is this peculiarity in Mr. Jenyns's character, that though he has the worst opinion of human nature, he has the greatest kindness for the individuals who compose it; and such a conformity in his temper to everything and everybody in common things, that he seems equally pleased in societies the most opposite. Whatever scepticism he might once have been charged with, I believe him now to be a real believer. The doubts entertained by some persons of his sincerity, appear from his late work on the internal evidence of Christianity to be quite unfounded. I think him very sincere, but not having been long acquainted with the doctrines of revelation, the novelty of them has excited his love of paradox. The book is very ingenious: perhaps he brings rather too much ingenuity into his religion. I know, however, an instance in which this little work has converted a philosophical infidel, who had previously read all that had been written on the subject, without effect.

We dined on Thursday at the Bishop of Salisbury's. I was a little sad at first, to think of the old party's being so broken up. We had only the Bishop of Chester and Mr. Bryant who had belonged to it. There was other company, and too fine a dinner.

Only think of this being Friday, and no Lælius[1] mentioned. We did not meet till the other day at dinner, at Mrs. Montagu's, and then there were such wonderments and astonishments and lamenta-

[1] Mr. Pepys.

tions, that we had not met since last year. We were fifteen in company. Mr. Langton was one. I am sure you will honour him, when I tell you he is come on purpose to stay with Dr. Johnson, and that during his illness. He has taken a little lodging in Fleet Street, in order to be near, to devote himself to him. He has as much goodness as learning, and that is saying a bold thing of one of the first Greek scholars we have.

Mr. Locke has just sent me a curiosity, the first number of the London Chronicle, written by Johnson, an excellent paper, and very characteristic of the author. Mrs. Carter breakfasted with me on Monday. I saw the Lady Windsors the other night at a great assembly at Lady Rothes, which was so hot, so crowded, and so fine, that I never passed a more dull unpleasant evening. I am absolutely resolved I will go to such parties no more. How I grudged the waste of time, to pass an evening squeezed to death among a parcel of fine idle people, many of whom care as little for me, as I do for them; and where it was impossible to have any thing worthy of being called conversation. It was not only vanity but vexation of spirit; but one is drawn in by assurances of 'a very small party.'

From the same to the same.

Holywell House, St. Alban's, March, 1784.

I imagine this date will puzzle you a little, for I believe I forgot to tell you that Lady Spencer had

given us an invitation to spend a week with her. I have no reason to regret the expedition; for to say nothing of the country, the air has done me much good. I have been out ever since breakfast, exploring the environs of this old town, and tracing the remains of the ancient city of Verulam. There is little of the Roman remains to see, but there is a great deal to imagine, and that is full as well, or perhaps better; but what has delighted me much more, was to see a statue cut out of one piece of marble, of the wisest, brightest, (I will not add Pope's other epithet,) of mankind; you will know that I mean the great prophet of science, my Lord Bacon. I was also vastly pleased with seeing his noble old house, and gallery full of delightful original pictures, of Elizabeth's court. The venerable mansion is, alas! about to be pulled down. Holywell House, where I now am, is going to be repaired. It is at present a very cold one, though my lady has just told me there are twenty fires in it. It was built by Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, whose beautiful form is looking down upon me while I write. By this picture, she must have been a most lovely woman. Lady Spencer is very composed and cheerful, lives with great regularity, and abounds in charitable actions. She has a constant succession of friends in her house. There is no ceremony or form of any kind, as you will believe, when I tell you that I have not changed my dress till to-day, though we have had many noble visitors. I had intended to have called on Dr. Cotton, but he is grown very old, and I was

afraid he would not recollect me. Georgiana Shipley is here, and is my walking companion: and the other day we took a ride of twenty miles to a sale of books. We were diverted with bidding for lots for other people, without knowing what they contained, and brought home above a hundred little ragged old books for Lady S——, Lord Jersey, &c. The diversion was, to pick out all that was ridiculous in our lots and put into theirs. I employed myself, while I was here, in knitting a pair of stockings for one of Mrs. Pepys's children: I enclose a copy of the letter which I sent with them.

To Mrs. (afterwards Lady,) Pepys.

THE BAS BLANC.

DEAR MADAM,

I beg leave to dedicate the inclosed work, the fruit of a few days' leisure at St. Alban's, to either of your little children, of whose capacity of receiving it you will be the best judge upon trial, for there is a certain fitness, without which the best works are of little value. Though it is so far of a moral cast that its chief end is utility, yet I hope that the child will be able to run through it with pleasure. I may say, without vanity, that it is formed upon the precepts of the great masters of the Epopœia, with but few exceptions. The subject is simple, but it has a beginning, middle, and end. The exordium is the natural introduction by which you are let into the whole work. The middle, I trust,

is free from any unnatural tumour or inflation, and the end from any disproportionate littleness. I have avoided bringing about the catastrophe too suddenly, as I knew that would hurt him at whose feet I lay it. For the same reason, I took care to shun too pointed a conclusion, still reserving my great acuteness for this part of my subject. I had materials for a much longer work, but the art to stop has always appeared to me to be no less the greater secret of a poet, than the art to blot; and whoever peruses this work will see that I could not have added another line, without such an unravelling as would have greatly perplexed the conclusion. My chief care has been to unite the two great essentials of composition, ease and strength. I do not pretend to have paid any great attention to the passions, and yet I hope my work will not be found deficient, either in warmth or softness: but these will be better felt than expressed. Now and then, partly from negligence and partly from tenuity, I have broken the thread of my narration, but have pieced it so happily, that none but the eye of a professor, which looks into the interior, will detect it: and the initiated are generally candid, because they are in the secret. What little ornament there is, I have bestowed, not injudiciously I trow, on the slenderest part. You will find but one episode, and even that does not obstruct the progress of the main subject; and for parallels I will be bold to say Plutarch does not furnish one so perfect. The rare felicity of this species of composition is the bold attempt to unite poetry with mechanics, for

which see the clock-work in the third section. As all innovation is a proof of a false taste, or a fantastic vanity, I was contented to use the old machinery in working up this piece. I have taken care not to overlay the severe simplicity of the ancients (my great precursors in this walk,) with any finery of my own invention; and like other moderns, you will find I have failed only in proportion as I have neglected my model. After all, I wish the work may not be thought too long; but of this he to whose use it is dedicated will be the best judge: his feelings must determine, and that is a decision from which there lies no appeal; for in this case, as in most others, *le tact* is a surer standard than rules. I beg your pardon for so tedious a preface to so slight a performance; but the subject has been near my heart as often as I have had the work in hand; and as I expect it will long survive all my other productions, I am desirous to deposit it in the Pepys collection; humbly hoping, that though neither defaced nor mutilated, it may be found as useful as many a black-letter manuscript of more recondite learning.

I am, my dear Madam, &c.

L'AMIE DES ENFANS.

To her sister.

Adelphi, 1784.

I have been falsely assuring everybody that there was no contest, but that the old members stood for Bristol. And yet we are such fools as to read

history, and believe it too, when we can't come at the truth of what is passing in our own town. A propos of elections—I had like to have got into a fine scrape the other night. I was going to pass the evening at Mrs. Cole's, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. I went in a chair, and they carried me through Covent Garden. A number of people, as I went along, desired the men not to go through the Garden, as there were a hundred armed men, who, suspecting every chairman belonged to Brookes's, would fall upon us. In spite of my entreaties, the men would have persisted; but a stranger, out of humanity, made them set me down, and the shrieks of the wounded, for there was a terrible battle, intimidated the chairmen, who at last were prevailed upon to carry me another way. A vast number of people followed me, crying out, 'It is Mrs. Fox; none but Mr. Fox's wife would dare to come into Covent Garden in a chair: she is going to canvass in the dark.' Though not a little frightened, I laughed heartily at this, but shall stir no more in a chair for some time. Mrs. Garrick is so interested for Pitt, that we send the man every day to wait the close of the poll, and to bring us the numbers. I do not believe she could eat her dinner without knowing how matters go. I, too, try to be interested, and sometimes do really act solicitude very well; but unluckily for my principles, I met Fox canvassing the other day, and he looked so sensible and agreeable, that if I had not turned my eyes another way, I believe it would have been all over with me.

I have got a new admirer, and we flirt together prodigiously; it is the famous General Oglethorpe, perhaps the most remarkable man of his time. He was foster-brother to the Pretender, and is much above ninety years old; the finest figure you ever saw. He perfectly realizes all my ideas of Nestor. His literature is great, his knowledge of the world extensive, and his faculties as bright as ever; he is one of the three persons still living who were mentioned by Pope; Lord Mansfield and Lord Marchmont are the other two. He was the intimate friend of Southern, the tragic poet, and of all the wits of that time. He is perhaps the oldest man of a *gentleman* living. I went to see him the other day, and he would have entertained me by repeating passages from Sir Eldred. He is quite a preux chevalier, heroic, romantic, and full of the old gallantry. On Monday I dined at Lady Middleton's, and in the evening went to Mrs. Ord's, where there was everything delectable in the blue way. Mr. Walpole and I fought over the old ground, Pope against Dryden, and Mrs. Montagu backed him, but I would not give up.

I wish Sally had been in my place to-night; she would have enjoyed it, and I could have spared it. I have just returned from Mrs. Montagu's, where I sat close by Lord Rodney, crowned with laurel and glory. Mrs. Pepys proposed that all the women in the room should go up and salute him, and wanted me to begin; I professed that I would willingly be the second, but who would be the first? Nobody choosing to undertake it, so fine a project

fell to the ground. He looks more like a delicate feeble man of quality than a hero.

April, 1784.

Did I tell you what a pleasant breakfast I had at Miss Hamilton's, where I met Lord Stormont by appointment? He was vastly agreeable. But as we had Mr. de Luc, and Sir William Hamilton, we had a little too much of virtû, and Calabria, and Vesuvius, all which was more interesting to them, than to his lordship and me. Miss Hamilton told us a pleasant anecdote of Hutton, the Moravian, who has the honour of being occasionally admitted to the royal breakfast-table. 'Hutton,' said the King to him one morning, 'is it true that you Moravians marry without any previous knowledge of each other?' 'Yes, may it please your majesty,' returned Hutton, 'our marriages are *quite royal*.' We had at dinner on Saturday, the Abbé Grant from Rome, Sir William Hamilton, Sir Joshua, Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Vesey, Mrs. Carter, Miss Hamilton, and young Montagu, an amiable and agreeable young man. I think his excellent aunt judges very rightly in not sending him abroad for a year or two: he will learn as much from her conversation, and see as much good company in her house, as he could do in any foreign city in the world; and with greater safety to his morals. But to return to the company: in the evening we had Mrs. Walsingham, the Jenynses, the Pepyses, the Shipleys, Lady Rothes, Mrs. Ord, the Burneys, Mr. Walpole,—in short I think we had above thirty,

all as agreeable people as one would wish to see; and yet, being as it were at home, I was obliged to divide myself, to avoid the censure of addicting myself to favourites, so that I could not pick up much amusement, and indeed Mr. Walpole told me he never saw me so disagreeable; he wished I would be rude and entertaining; so I promised him I would the next time.

I am just returned from a very great dinner at Mrs. Montagu's; but the naughty king robbed us again of Mr. Smelt. Colman dined with us, and inquired about you all. I cannot spare time to write another word, as I am very busy copying the Bas Bleu for the king, who desires to have it. Yesterday Dr. Heberden made me a very long and kind visit, and said civil things about the Bas Bleu. He seems eager to have it printed, and tried to combat all my reasons, which I told him were too good to give up. I had a very kind note from Johnson about a week since; it was written in good spirits; and as it was a volunteer, and not an answer, it looks as if he were really better. He tells me he longs to see me, to praise the Bas Bleu as much as envy can praise;—there's for you!

April, 1784.

Did I tell you I went to see Dr. Johnson? Miss Monckton carried me, and we paid him a very long visit. He received me with the greatest kindness and affection, and as to the Bas Bleu, all the flattery I ever received from every body together would not make up the sum. He said,—but I

seriously insist you do not tell any body, for I am ashamed of writing it even to you;—he said 'there was no name in poetry that might not be glad' to own it.'[1] You cannot imagine how I stared: all this from Johnson, that parsimonous praiser! I told him I was delighted at his approbation; he answered quite characteristically, 'And so you may, for I give you the opinion of a man who does not rate his judgment in these things very low, I can tell you.'

We had a good party at the Bishop of St. Asaph's a few nights ago. Among the chief talkers was Mr. Erskine; he has amazing abilities, but to me he is rather brilliant than pleasant. His animation is vehemence; and he contrives to make the conversation fall too much on himself—a sure way not to be agreeable in mixed conversation. It is not natural that I should much commend his taste in letters, because he and I disagreed on the few subjects we started. I confess, however, that that is no proof of his being in the wrong. The bar seems to be a fitter theatre for his talents than the drawing-room, where good breeding is still more necessary than wit. On Saturday night Mrs. Garrick and I drank tea with Lælius[2] and his lady, only a *partie quarrée*, so quiet and comfortable! He read select passages from the poets, and we

[1] Her request was complied with: this passage never was shown to any one. We find a corroboration of this account in Johnson's own letters to Mrs. Thrale; he says, 'Miss More has written a poem called the Bas Bleu; which is in my opinion a very great performance. It wanders about in manuscript, and surely will soon find its way to Bath.

[2] Mr. Pepys.

commented, and criticised, and were chatty and foolish. We had been two months trying to get that quiet evening.

I have told Mrs. Vesey all the fine things you say of your pathetic Recorder.[1] She agrees with me in thinking him very bright, though a little coarse.

The autumn of this year was passed with her sisters at Bristol.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bristol, 1784.

MY DEAR MADAM,

What a delightful letter did you send me, and how grateful did I feel for it: nay, the pleasant odour still remains upon my mind. It was the more acceptable for being a volunteer; and one always receives a gift with more gratitude than a debt. *Mais le moyen d'ecrire?* with so much company and so many interruptions. Bristol is as *bad* as London, without being as *good.* I have seen a good many of your Kentish friends lately, not one of whom, however, do I include as provoking the above lamentation. Mrs. E. Bouverie, Miss Marsham, Lady Hales, and Lady Plymouth's family. We made such large parties that I fancied myself not in Bristol but London. Add to all this, that the Provost of Eton and Mrs. Roberts are on a visit at

[1] Richard Burke.

our Dean's, which causes visitings, and replies, and rejoinders, without end. They press me much to halt for a week at Eton, on my road to London; which, as I have never seen Eton or Windsor, I should like very well; but the season opposes every idea of pleasure in seeing places; so if I can I shall retract the promise which in a rash moment I made, and reserve this visit for brighter skies and longer days. I *heartily* accept, my dear Madam, your congratulation, on the high honour done me by so respectable and learned a body of foreigners: there is, I believe, no greater danger in this uncertain world than that a head which is only tolerably reasonable should be turned with the honours and glories of it. Heaven, however, often by some interfering Providence prevents it. The very day on which I received *Mes Pancartes Academiciennes*, I was taken ill of a fever, from which, by the aid of blistering, and the whole medical artillery, I am quite recovered; so I beg you will not waste any compassion on *me*, my dear Madam, for 'Richard's himself again;' and I am going to confirm my cure by riding on horseback. My time, too, has been much taken up in answering all my letters from France. The gentleman who wrote to me in the name of the Academy has translated Percy and several other of my things into French. He gave me instructions how I was to act, and in what manner I was to write to the whole Academy collectively; and what is worst told me that my letter of thanks, which must be in French, was to be transcribed and preserved in

the archives of the Academy. Oh! how I wished for l'aimable Hôstesse de Glanvilla at my elbow, to have written this letter for me! My desire of concealing this honour did not spring from any kind of affectation, but from a real and deep consciousness how little claim I had to such a title. Dear Mrs. Vesey was quite delighted with her visit to Glanvilla. Dr. Warren, it seems, has pronounced Mr. Vesey to be at present unfit for the voyage to Dublin.

I am glad to learn that poor Johnson was able to dine at Teston last autumn: he looked badly; said it was a heavy stroke, but that it may still please God to restore him. Alas! I doubt it.

I have not had time to read any of Dr. Blair's Rhetoric. Bristol has all the bustle of London, and leaves me almost as little time to myself; but one must submit to the disadvantage of an acquaintance too large to be select; yet here are many excellent persons.

Mr. Maty (I think) grows very pert and flippant, and decides with a tone of superiority that I believe I could better bear if he did not write in the first person. Perhaps it is the egotism which offends me; he decides on the literary rank of our amiable bishop as authoritatively as Quintilian could have done, but not quite so wisely.

My five volumes of 'Hoole's Ariosto' are just brought me: each volume has a very pretty frontispiece, and that, I believe, is as far as I shall go. I mean no disrespect to the translation, which I take to be a very good one; and people of taste

will be glad that English literature is enriched with a good version of so original a poet; but this great but naughty poet must be read, if read at all, in the original.

I have had a great many prints, pamphlets, and other little things sent me from Rouen, by a person who came from thence; but unluckily for me he happened to have put a popish prayer-book among my things, which were therefore, by being caught in bad company, all found guilty of popery at Brighthelmstone, and condemned to be burnt, to my great regret, as it will grieve the senders. By this time, my dear Madam, I fancy you will be looking towards London, in search of the 'human face divine;' which, after all the pleasures of retirement and rural felicity, is not amiss as a change. To hear birds sing one six months, and men talk for the other, is a grateful vicissitude. I hope to get to Mrs. Garrick in December, and to knock some fine morning at a double door in Audley Street, before I take the veil at Hampton; for we really live as quiet and as solitary as nuns; but as it is not *for ever*, I like it prodigiously; particularly as it gives me (and it is the only place that does so) opportunity to indulge my appetite for reading to the full extent of its voracity. I mix light anecdote with grave metaphysics. I read last spring Monsieur de St. Simon, which is easy of digestion after dinner; and Mr. Locke, which requires the mind and faculties to be broad awake, after tea. Mr. Stewart's new History of Scotland lay on the table, and presented its handsome type to me in vain, till I had finished

Mr. Hayley's new work;—the poet before the historian is, I think, but lawful precedence, unless for those who are proselytes to Sir Harry Saville's opinion, that poets are the best authors next to those who write prose. My dear Madam, I hope all are well who belong to you, from Charles Street to the Land's End.

I am, most gratefully yours,
H. MORE.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

1784.

I have been an arrant vagabond, my dear Madam, since you heard from me last, and have been a transient sojourner in many a hospitable mansion open for the succour of way-worn travellers. As you well know that your friend Mrs. Walsingham is all sense and spirit, you will readily believe that our time passed very pleasantly at Thames Ditton: nothing could surpass her politeness. I said I had never seen an air-baloon; she struck with her magic wand, and lo! a balloon appeared, forty-five feet in circumference; I had a great mind to wish for an eighty-four gun man-of-war, as I conjecture she keeps them also ready in case her guests should wish for one. My Kentish tour proved in all respects a very pleasant one. Teston and its inhabitants are delightful. Hunton[1] is indeed a sweet little spot, and our excellent Bishop seems to

[1] The little country living of Bishop Porteus.

have more true enjoyment, and to possess himself more entirely there than in any other place:

'There contemplation plumes her ruffled wings;—

for the smoothest wing will be ruffled by the crowd and pressure of the bustling world. The fortnight I spent with our friend Mrs. Montagu I need not say to you, my dear Madam, was passed profitably and pleasantly; as one may say of her, what Johnson has said of somebody else, that 'she never opens her mouth but to say *something*.' The Primate of Ireland and Sir William Robinson were at Sandleford for the first three or four days after I got thither. I was a little afraid of his Grace at first, as he carries a dignity you know, in his person and *abord*, which excites more respect than is quite consistent with one's ease; but he laid aside his terrors, and was all graciousness and complacency, and condescended to join in the favourite subjects of the two ladies, poetry and criticism; though, if I may hazard a conjecture upon his turn of mind, I should rather think him distinguished for wisdom, and knowledge of men and things in a worldly view, than for any acute wit, or polite literature. He seems, however, to have a general good taste. The great apartment, that was the chapel, is quite in order; and the romantic scenery presented to the eye by the gothic aisle which fronts the great windows, is very delightful. We enjoyed our moonlight gambols not a little. I could not help regretting that there were no such little amiable gentlefolks as fairies, to people a scene so congenial to their characters. Oh

that these sweet tiny intelligences would admit me to some of their merry festivals! I would rather eat a slice of moonshine with Robin Goodfellow, or sip an acorn full of dew with Oberon, than taste the finest supper that ever Weltjie decorated; and you cannot imagine how I envy a pretty Welsh girl I know, because she really believes in the existence and attendance of these little aerial dears. But as a light thought now and then introduces a serious one, it is charming to think that one day we ourselves shall be still less incumbered with body, and flesh, and sense, than even these little incorporeal favourites of mine; and that without a figure, without poetry, without fancy, and without romance, we shall be all pure intellect. I cannot think without envy, how little changing and rarifying Fenelon, and a few others will require, before they become pure sublimated spirits. My appointment at Oxford was to flirt with Dr. Johnson, but he was a recreant knight, and had deserted. He had been for a fortnight at the house of my friend Dr. Adams, the head of Pembroke, with Mr. Boswell; but the latter being obliged to go to town, Johnson was not thought well enough to remain behind, and afterwards to travel by himself; so that he left my friend's house the very day I got thither, though they told me he did me the honour to be very angry and out of humour, that I did not come so soon as I had promised. I am grieved to find that his mind is still a prey to melancholy, and that the fear of death operates on him to the destruction of his peace. It is grievous—it is unaccountable! He

who has the Christian hope upon the best foundation; whose faith is strong, whose morals are irreproachable! But I am willing to ascribe it to bad nerves, and bodily disease.

While I was at Oxford, I received so obliging and pressing a letter from Mrs. Barrington, threatening me with the loss of the bishop's blessing if I refused,—that I was prevailed upon to go to Mongewell, though it was rather a retrograde motion. I spent a few days pleasantly, and I hope not unprofitably with them. There happened to be an ordination while I was there, and it was edifying to see the earnest, affectionate, and devotional manner in which the Bishop went through that important ceremony. I could not see anybody of Trinity College; but the *general* accounts I could pick up of your young lords were to their honour. The above-mentioned circumstances delayed my return hither till two days ago, when I arrived with my friend Mrs. Kennicott, who is come to spend some time with me. The comfort to find all my friends alive and well after an absence of more than eight months, is no small blessing! In the post-chaise, Mrs. K. and I read our worthy friend, the Dean of Canterbury's,[1] letters on Infidelity. We have both a high esteem for his worth and parts; but could not help wishing as we went along, that he had suppressed a great part of this book: it will not add to his reputation, nor (though extremely well-intended) can it do much good. He attacks the

[1] Dr. Horne.

infidels in their own way, with gaiety and humour; but irony is a figure which it requires great skill to manage, and I am sorry to say, he is sometimes low where he intends to be humorous; *au reste* there is some good argument, and I like almost all the latter part. I am now reading with great appetite Professor White's Bampton Lectures. It is long since I have met with a more noble, judicious, spirited, and eloquent defence of the Christian religion. His parallel of Christ and Mahomet is drawn with great piety, skill, and temper. This last quality always weighs prodigiously with me. Champions defeat their end, when they vilify beyond the truth. Those who say that Mahomet was not a person of very great sagacity, only help his cause.

It is now high time to thank you, my dear madam, for your very handsome list of subscribers. Do you know that my poor milkwoman has been sent for to Stoke, to visit the Duchess of Beaufort and the Duchess of Rutland; and to Bath, to Lady Spencer, Mrs. Montagu, &c. I hope all these honours will not turn her head, and indispose her for her humble occupations. I would rather have her *served* than *flattered*. Your noble and munificent friend, the Duchess Dowager of Portland, has sent me a twenty pound bank-note for her; so as I take it, she will soon be the richest poetess, certainly the richest milkwoman in Great Britain.

It is too late to send my letter to the post, but I hope it will escape untaxed to-morrow. I had a great deal of company yesterday evening, Kentish

Lady Hailes, and her four blooming daughters; Lady Bathurst, and her fair train; so we made up quite a little London-looking party. I am going to these last when I have released you; which, if you had not all the goodness you have, you would have been longing for full half an hour ago; but when I begin writing to you, I really do not know when to leave off, because it is so like talking to you; and if you remember, I always thought eight o'clock struck sooner in your drawing-room, than anywhere else.

Yours ever,
My dear Madam,
H. More.

From Mrs. Vesey to Miss H. More.

Margate, May, 1784.

My dear Madam,

The first line you cast your eye upon, will make an apology for not answering your obliging letter in London useless; but make the prize high enough, and even pot-hooks will talk. It is impossible not to tell you my dream last night. The conversation fell upon Charles the Sixth and the Duc D'Orleans at the fatal bal masqué. I imagined we were sitting together, when you suddenly left me to whisper a masque habited en Sauvage, like the Duc D'Orleans. I inquired who he was; you answered, 'It is the sun.' Next morning I had the pleasure on opening my eyes upon your delightful packet, a call to banish sleep,—there was never before

such a trumpet at Margate. How could I help exclaiming, my dream is out; his Excellency has been telling her of the bright regions, the bright geniuses he has illuminated in remote antiquity! She is quite at home at the enchanting banquets. Mr. Vesey, who is much better acquainted with the geniuses, the Beaux of Athens, Rome, and London, than myself, is enchanted, and will write to you himself. I suppose it will steal into print under adopted names, and I desire to take my place, as I cannot think of a name of two syllables. I have read your poem but once, for Mr. Vesey took it from me, and read it with such delight as I cannot express. Airing is generally a dull hour, but here it is enlivened by the dashing of the sea, and the prospect of the fatal Goodwin Sands, which have been under the inspection of the Royal Society, and the danger is now found to be suction. This I had from a daughter of Sir Cloudesley Shovel. The fields are pleasant, from the rich cultivation, where wheat and poppy rise together. These two blessings, of sleep and food in conjunction, have been attempted in the remarks of some poet's quill. I wish it had been your's, and I should have had them by heart. Mr. Vesey says, every part of the globe grows wheat: I doubt not but the poppy is her handmaid, though the jade in warmer climates sometimes over-offices her business. I am now writing in a lobby on the stair-case, on a card-table; the demon of gaming no doubt will think himself very ill-used, though his handmaid chance has the sole direction of my pen.

I have the pleasure of talking of you every evening with the Duchess of Portland and Miss Harris; the latter I hope will tell you next winter, how she skaited through the northern climates, almost to every court, over frozen seas, which, when they were liquid, gave her the episode of a *Shipwreck:* but one need not go to Russia for the artillery of winter; we have had it here, and it is now howling upon my staircase. A lady was resolved to brave all its majestic tricks, and took a lodging upon a dangerous cliff, where, two nights since, the sea went to bed to her. I am very glad Mrs. Garrick and you gave Mrs. Montagu the pleasure of your company: her resources of conversation are as inexhaustible as her friendship: she will certainly go down to distant ages, while Garrick and More will partake the gale.

I would toss this blotted paper out of the window, but it must take its run before the last hour, free from post tax. Adieu, most agreeable friend, look with some compassion upon a worn-out pen, more fit to scratch a letter to a Hottentot, than to one so polished and delightful. Let me conclude with what I feel for the place you have given me in your charming poem; though undeserving, I am not unfeeling.

Your most obliged and affectionate,

E. VESEY.

P. S. I have met with a fragment of Gray's upon Kingsgate, with a fine poetical picture of the Goodwin Sands, and the uninhabited monastery, but

so malevolent against the builder, that I cannot believe it to be all his own.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, July 17, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I have been so much employed since I came hither, in doing the honours of the neighbouring woods and rocks to some friends, and have been so entirely a vagrant ever since I left London, that I have hardly done so grave a thing as to write a letter, nor so idle a thing as to write verses, nor so irksome a one as to correct them. I have made the most of this enchanting weather, and like King Lear have 'abjured all roofs.' My reading has been as idle as the rest of my employments, and if I do not soon reform, I shall become a convert to the entreaties of my gay and gallant friend, General Oglethorpe, who has long been trying to proselyte me to the old romance; gravely lamenting that the only fault I have is refusing to read these records; and assuring me that it is the only way to acquire *noble sentiments;* but I do confess that hitherto I have never been able to get through a single page of histories which have no approximation to the manners and passions of this world. I must have *men* and *women,* with whom I can have sentiments, affections, and interests in common: I don't care how romantic the story, or how exalted the character, provided it be still *probable* adventure, and *possible* perfection.

I have just laboured through Dryden's Fables, chiefly out of complaisance to Mrs. Montagu, Mr. Walpole, and Dr. Burney; but like a confirmed bigot, all that I read on the other side of the question, only serves to confirm me more stedfastly in the old faith. I am ready to allow the beauty of a multitude of passages, the spirit of the expression, and the vigour and variety of the versification, but they have the deadly poetical sin of not *interesting* me; nor do lines from them occur to my mind every hour, suitable to *every* character and to *every* occurrence, as they do from Shakspeare, the poet of human actions and human passions; and from Pope, that eternal embellisher of common sense, common life, and just thinking; whose every line is a maxim or a portrait. You will say I must be terribly indigent of matter, to tread over again this beaten ground, and you will say right.

I had the satisfaction of hearing that Miss Seward's *Louisa* made you weep. I remember the difficulty I had to make you promise to read it. The same repugnance I have had to combat in a dozen other people: all were as unwilling as if it had been a sermon, or something that was to do them good; but when they *had* read it, all who had any taste for imagery, sentiment, and poetry, thanked me for having compelled them to enjoy this pleasure; and I expected *you* would have had the same gratitude. Miss Seward's imagination is bright and glowing; she is rich in expression, and admirable at description; but to counterbalance all these excellences she has one fault, which is of great

magnitude, but which may not perhaps be so great an offence in your eyes, as I confess it is in mine: what it is, I shall not mention, and in case it does not strike you I am willing you should call me mean and malignant for suggesting it: a little envy is natural, if not pardonable: when I see Mrs. Pepys I will tell *her* my objections. I am much obliged to you for exerting your critical acumen on the verses; I shall take your hints, make the alterations you suggest, and leave out the two lines whose incorrect rhymes you quarrel with. Sometimes I am puzzled about rhyming, whether it should be to the eye or to the ear, but am never *quite* contented with a rhyme which does not satisfy both.

Since I have given into this kind of dissipation, of reading nothing but idle verses, I wish you would tell me of something to read. I have run through a few cantos of Ariosto; but the casual delight I received was so often broken in upon by serious resentment and insupportable ennui, that I believe I shall give it up, for though I am often pleased, I am often angry, and still oftener tired: do not betray me, for I know it is *mauvais ton* to have so little enthusiasm on this subject. A propos of enthusiasm, do you remember a sweet little poem of Dr. Warton's, '*The Enthusiast?*' I read it yesterday in one of my rambles, with such an accompaniment of scenery, as made it very delightful to me, and just such as the author may be supposed to have written it in.

You will think it must be a wet day here by my writing so long a letter, but you are mistaken. I

would not, however, venture to send such an one if I did not hope you were settled in the country, where people expect and forgive nonsense with more ease than they do in London. I shall release you, however, after desiring you to present my kind compliments, to Mrs. Pepys, and to tell her sweet little boy that I love him very much.

I am your obliged, &c.

H. More.

From Miss More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, 1784.

Dear Sir,

There has scarcely one bright September sun darted through my window upon my écritoire, but I have resolved to thank you for your very entertaining letter, which I received one day at dinner at Sandleford, and which furnished a very pleasing desert to the whole party; for to show you what *entire* confidence you may place in me, I obeyed your injunction of *not* betraying your treasonable sentiments, by putting your letter into Mrs. Montagu's hand, who forthwith read it aloud: this produced a great deal of pleasantry, and renewed the old critical squabbles again. We had not forces for a regular battle, but many a skirmish did we fight; in these I was sure to be worsted by the disciplined veteran, who alas! has *arms as well as rules*.

I need not tell you that my visit was an exceedingly pleasant one: we passed our time in the full enjoyment of the best blessings *this* world has

to bestow,—friendship, tranquillity, and literature. You agree with me, I know, in thinking that what makes our accomplished friend so delightful in society, is, that in her company *les jeux et les ris* constantly act as pages and maids of honour to Apollo and the nine, who always owe half their attractions to their lovely train; and who, though very *respectable* without them, can never without them be entirely *captivating*. So well were we pleased with the manner in which we lived together, that we have been actually in treaty for repairing to Sandleford to *encore* my visit, but we cannot accommodate our time to each other, so I shall stay till Mrs. M. comes to Bath.

I have lived a most gloriously idle life, all the last months, rambling about the romantic hills and delicious vallies of Somersetshire: which is full of enchanting scenery. The views are rather interesting than magnificent; and the neighbourhood of the friend's house where I was, abounds with the most smiling vallies, the most touching little home views, the prettiest rising and falling grounds, the clearest living streams, and the most lovely hanging woods I ever saw. These gentle scenes, which are *agrestes* without being savage, are, I am persuaded, more delightful to *live* amongst, than the blaze and the roar, the awful and astonishing, of the sublime: of this *I* am convinced, by a ride we took through the lofty cliffs of Cheddar, so stupendously romantic that the shade of Ossian or the ghost of Taliessen himself might range, not undelighted, through them: my imagination was delighted, was con-

founded, was oppressed, and darted a thousand years back into the days of chivalry and enchantment, at seeing hang over my head, vast ledges of rock exactly resembling mouldered castles and ruined abbeys. I had a delightful confusion of broken images in my head, without one distinct idea; but the delight was of so serious a nature that I could scarcely refrain from crying, especially when we sat down upon a fragment of rock, and heard one of Gray's odes finely set, and sung with infinite feeling. I would have given the world to have heard my favourite Ode to Melancholy by Beaumont and Fletcher; you know it:

> An eye that's fastened to the ground,
> A tongue chained up without a sound;
> Gloomy cells, and twilight groves,
> Places which pale Passion loves, &c. &c.

But these pensive pleasures should be repeated at long intervals; they wind up the mind too high, and infuse into the spirit a sentiment compounded of sadness and delight, which, though it may qualify one to write odes, yet indisposes one for a much more indispensable thing, the enjoyment of the intercourse of ordinary society. But you will grow sick of these sombre scenes, though I think you would have performed the pilgrimage itself with enthusiasm.

Present my kind compliments to Mrs. Pepys: I know not where you are, but I suppose on Mount Ephraim.

I am your obliged, &c.

H. More.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

1784.

I am rejoiced to find that your imagination has been so finely regaled with beautiful scenery, for I know that with *you* the impression made by these delightful views penetrates much deeper than the eye. I too have been constantly feasted with this most enchanting country, and have daily felt, what I hold to be one of the highest pleasures in life, at least one of the most pure and unmixed, that exhilarating tranquillity which a fine country and fine weather never fail to inspire. There is a consciousness which always attends that species of delight, and which adds much to its effect on the mind, viz. that it cannot be indulged to *excess*. This was certainly meant by Milton when he calls the vernal delight *unblamed;* but I think it may be carried a little further, and not only be considered as *unblamed*, but by a very easy transition converted into the most natural and sublime act of devotion, for how is it possible,

> When the eye has caught new pleasures,
> While the landscape round it measures,
> Russet lawn and fallows grey, &c.

not to exclaim

> These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good!

I am not only acquainted with the Ode to

Melancholy, but have heard it admirably set to music by Weber, for which, I am told, we are indebted to the taste of Sir Watkin Williams. It is in truth a charming composition, and I remember being surprised at myself for not having seen it before I heard it performed, but *that* is only one of the many thousand jewels which lie hid under the rubbish of Beaumont and Fletcher, and which I fear will ever lie hid from me, as I shall not have the heart, at this time of day, to wade through so much as I must do, to get at them. If *you* have waded through them, I should esteem it a great favour if you would refer me to any parts which have particularly struck you, as I could rely with so much security upon *your* taste for the selection. I once asked Mrs. Thrale to undertake this office for me, but she told me that she had omitted to mark them at the time, and that she could not think of going over the same road again, as she well remembered that the way was full of *mire*, and the *stepping stones* at a great distance. Was not this well said?

Mrs. Pepys desires me to remember her to you in the kindest manner.

Much yours,

W. W. Pepys.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Bristol, 1784.

How kind and generous is it in you, my dearest Mrs. Carter, to consult my wishes, rather than my deserts, and to give me the pleasure of receiving such a delightful letter from you, so much sooner than I could reasonably hope for it. I hope the speediness of my reply will not make you repent your indulgence. *Faire des heureux*, is one of the highest privileges of our nature; and I assure you that you exercise that prerogative in no low degree, whenever you write to me or talk to me.

The abolition of franks is quite a serious affliction to me; not that I shall ever regret paying the postage for my friends' letters, but for fear it should restrain them from writing. It is a tax upon the free currency of affection and sentiment, and goes nearer my heart than the cruel decision against literary property did; for that was only taxing the *manufacture*, but this the raw *material*.

I believe I forgot to mention that I had disposed of part of your bounty to the poor woman. Mrs. Palmer, the bookseller, speaks highly of her honesty and sobriety, but says that her pride is so great, that she will let nobody know where she lodges; and it is but seldom that she can prevail upon her to eat, when she calls upon her, though she knows her at the time to be near perishing. I could not but smile at the absurd notions people entertain of right and wrong; for this pre-

posterous pride Mrs. Palmer seemed to think noble *fierté*. However I have made her *condescend* to promise that if she should have a dangerous sickness, or be confined to her bed, she would vouchsafe to let me know the place of her abode, that she might not die of want: and yet all this pride pretends to a great deal of religion. Poor creatures! not to know that humility is the foundation of virtue; and that pride is as incompatible with piety towards God, as it is with the repose of our own hearts.

I have read the first volume only of *Les Veillées du Château*. What a surprising talent that woman has, of making every thing that passes through her hands interesting! the barrenest and most unpromising subjects 'she turns to favour and prettiness.' Yet this is the woman with whom, I am told upon unquestionable authority, I must not cultivate a friendship. Can it be possible, my dear friend, that she who labours with so much ability and success in the great vineyard of education, should herself be deficient in the most important qualities which she so skilfully paints, and so powerfully recommends? What motives for humiliation, for self-distrust, and circumspection in one's own conduct does such a character suggest to me! I am never so effectually humbled as in contemplating the defects of a shining character. So far from feeling any interior joy that the distance between them and me seems to be lessened, I am deeply alarmed, lest those of my own actions which seem the least exceptionable, should either proceed from

ong motives, or be a cover for false principles. And I do assure you, my dear Mrs. Carter, with all the truth of sincere friendship, that one of my deepest causes of uneasiness is, lest I should deceive others, and especially myself, as to the motives of my own actions. It is so easy to practise a creditable degree of seeming virtue, and so difficult to purify and direct the affections of the heart, that I feel myself in continual danger of appearing better than I am; and I verily believe it is possible to make one's whole life a display of splendid virtues and agreeable qualities, without ever setting one's foot towards the narrow path, or even one's face towards the strait gate.

I hope we shall not lose Miss Hamilton entirely out of London; and I long for the decision of that point: but whatever will be most prudent and proper for her, I shall acquiesce in.

Yours, my dear Madam,
most faithfully,
H. M.

Sandleford Priory, 1784.

MY DEAR MRS. CARTER,

The date will discover to you that I write from the delightful abode of our delightful friend. There is an irregular beauty and greatness in the new buildings, and in the cathedral aisles which open to the great gothic window, which is exceedingly agreeable to the imagination. It is solemn without being sad, and gothic without being gloomy. Last night by a bright moon-light, I enjoyed this singular

scenery most feelingly: it shone in all its glory; but I was at a loss with what beings to people it: it was too awful for fairies, and not dismal enough for ghosts. There is a great propriety in its belonging to the champion of Shakspeare, for like him it is not only beautiful without rules, but almost in defiance of them. I have been such a stroller, that I have hardly done so serious a thing as to write a letter during the whole bright and pleasant month of September. I spent that month at the house of a friend, in one of the most enchanting vales of Somersetshire. The surrounding scenery was so lovely, so full of innocent wildness, that I do not know any place that ever caught such hold of my imagination. If spring is the poet's season, it must be allowed that autumn is the painter's. Such delicious warmth in the colouring of the woods! Every morning I rode through the most delightful vallies, or crept along the sides of the most beautiful hanging woods, where the blue smoke ascending from the cleanest white cottages in the world, had the prettiest effect imaginable: it was a sort of thin grey ether, a kind of poetical smoke, which seemed too pretty to be connected with the useful, —very unlike the gross, substantial culinary vapour which suggests ideas only of corporeal and common things. But most devoutly did I wish for you, one day that I passed in a narrow and deep valley, under a vast ledge of rocks, so lofty and stupendous as to impress the mind with ideas the most solemn and romantic. They were shaped by nature into forms the most astonishing and fantastic, exactly

resembling Gothic castles and ruined abbeys; which brought with them a train of broken images, wild and amazing, or awful and affecting, as the scenes succeeded each other. But I was exceedingly touched, when sitting down on a huge fragment of rock, some of the company performed one of Gray's wildest odes, in a style of taste and feeling which made the happiest accompaniment imaginable to the scenery.

You, my dear Madam, who enjoy whatever is exquisite in poetical composition, or delightful in natural objects, with all your first enthusiasm, would have greatly enjoyed this spot—and I am sure my enjoyment would have been doubled by having it so participated.

Mrs. Ord called and drank tea with us last night, in her way to Bath. She brings a good account of our common friends who are still in town—'the leavings of Pharsalia.' The Veseys are to set out to-day for Margate; the Pepyses for Tonbridge. Miss Hamilton's marriage, Mrs. Garrick tells me, is going on prosperously. May she be as happy as she deserves, which I take to be a warm wish.

I see, or rather feel, that there is no perfect happiness in this world; for instead of enjoying my favourite Gothic arch as completely as I ought to do, I am continually thinking to myself—I wish Mrs. Carter or Mr. Smelt, or one or other of the higher order of beings were enjoying this with me; that would double my gratification.

Adieu, my dearest Mrs. Carter; there is not a

person in the world who loves and honours you with a warmer heart than

Your faithful and obliged,

H. M.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, 1784.

You ask after Lælius. He is such a favourite with great and learned ladies, that he is generally fastened down by one or other of them, and though he does now and then make some struggles for his liberty, it cannot always be obtained. Whereas Horace, liking nonsense-talk better than to be always with the Greeks and Romans, I sometimes get more than my share of him, as was the case at a most complete *bas bleu* the other night at Mrs. Vesey's, where was every thing witty and every thing learned that is to be had; but I generally stick by my old friends; so got into a nook between Mr. Walpole and Mr. Jenyns and was contented. I am very humble, you will say. The next night I was in a different scene, a most splendid assembly at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. The Prince of Wales was there. He was reckoned to come excessively early—half-past ten; you will judge what a time it was before we got away, though it was only a *private* party of about two hundred, and I believe the Bishop was heartily glad when he got rid of us. For my part, I do not desire to be ever again in such a crowd, whether of the great vulgar or the small!

Saturday I had a most pleasant afternoon with Mrs. Delany and the Duchess of Portland, who now begin to get up their spirits, which have been greatly depressed by the loss of Lady Mansfield. There had been a friendship of sixty years' standing between them. On Tuesday we dined with a man-party: a very pleasant lord, and a very merry judge, though that is against the proverb. And, on Friday, we had a small but very rational party at Mrs. Burrows's.

From the same to the same.

London, 1784.

At length we have been to breathe two or three days' fresh air at Hampton, where I literally dwelt among the lilacs. It was charming weather, only excessively hot. This is something like May—the *old May* of the poets. I should be very glad to be still in the country, but Mrs. G. has business in town. I was quite worn out last week with visiting—dined out six days following. It was well Sunday came to my relief, but it is all over now; and now I may very philosophically cry out, with Wolsey—

Vain pomp and glory of the world! I hate ye!

He did not, however, renounce it while he could keep it, nor complain of it while he could enjoy it; and I am afraid I am a little in the same way; not absolutely though, for I do refuse far more invitations than I accept.

Lord Bathurst has lent me a very entertaining collection of original letters, from Pope, Bolingbroke, Swift, Queen Mary, &c. and has promised to make me a present of anything I like out of them. I cannot say these communications have given me a very great idea of Queen Mary's head; but her heart, I am persuaded, was a very good one. The defect must have been in her education; for such spelling and such English I never saw; romantic and childish too, as to sentiment. My reverence for her many virtues leads me to hope she was very young when she wrote them.

Mrs. Vesey begged me most earnestly on Tuesday to meet a very small and choice party; which was made for Mrs. Delany and the Duchess of Portland. I dined with Mrs. Boscawen, and we went together. I had a great deal of chat with Mr. Burke, and so lively, and so foolish, and so good-humoured was he, and so like the agreeable Mr. Burke I once knew and admired, that I soon forgot his malefactions, and how often I had been in a passion with him for some of his speeches. He talked a great deal of politics with General Oglethorpe. He told him, with great truth, that he looked upon him as a more extraordinary person than any he had read of, for that he had founded the province of Georgia; had absolutely called it into existence, and had lived to see it severed from the empire which created it, and become an independent state. I could have added,—whose wicked eloquence was it that helped to bring about this mighty revolution? and by his looks, I believe

the venerable Nestor had the same thought. Yesterday was dear Mrs. Delany's birthday, and I went to pay my congratulations; very hearty they were, and very cordially were they accepted. She had received company all the morning; had a party at dinner, and spent the evening with the king and queen, who insisted that they should have her company on her birth-day; how pretty! and yesterday they took care to get her a place where she could enjoy the Handel Commemoration without danger or fatigue. Think of this astonishing woman's being able to go through all this at fourscore. She had formed a little project to surprise us here on Saturday: we had a great deal of company,—all the blues; and Mrs. Delany happening to hear of it, intended to appear unexpectedly, which would have delighted everybody, but something happened to spoil her scheme, and then she told us of it. We have been, for a few days, at Mrs. Bouverie's, at Teston. I never was in such an earthly Paradise. The park, the house, the garden, are all delightful; and nothing can exceed the goodness of the inhabitants, whose whole lives are spent in acts of beneficence. I hope you have been clever and industrious enough to discover some new little retired delightful spots for our gipsy frolics.[1]

[1] This alludes to those rural rambles which formed their chief amusements during the holidays, when furnished with their work-bags stored with provisions and books, they passed a few hours in the enjoyment of the open air, and the delightful scenery of the Clifton Rocks, King's Weston, &c.

CHAPTER IV.

DURING Hannah More's residence with her sisters at Bristol in the summer of this year, 1784, an extraordinary object was presented to the benevolence of the family. Their cook informed them that the person who called daily for the kitchen-stuff, for the maintenance of her pig, was, with her husband and several children, absolutely perishing with hunger; and drew such a picture of their distress, as excited their liveliest compassion. They lost no time in endeavouring to rescue this wretched family; and soon discovered that the woman was possessed of uncommon talents, which not even the last stage of famine and misery could repress. She produced several scraps of her poetry, in which were striking indications of genius. It immediately occurred to Miss H. More that this talent might be made the means of exciting a general interest in her behalf, and raising a fund to set her up in some creditable way of earning her subsistence. She accordingly took considerable pains in furnishing her with some of the common rules of writing, spelling, and composition; and while the

object of her charity was preparing, under her inspection, a small collection of poems, she was employing herself in writing statements of the case to all her friends of rank and fortune, bespeaking subscriptions to this work, and setting forth the probability of being enabled, after allowing the woman a certain portion of the sum raised, to apprentice out the children with the remainder. The generous zeal with which Miss H. More's friends seconded her wishes, soon produced a sum exceeding £600. which was placed in the funds under the trusteeship of Mrs. Montagu and herself. During thirteen months, her time was chiefly engrossed by her exertions in this woman's cause, in whose service, she has been heard to say, she calculated that in transcribing and correcting her poems, and in letters of application, she had written more than a thousand pages.

Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Sandleford, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,

Your letters would make one amends for any thing but the loss of your conversation. So greedy of perfect delight is the human heart, that I regretted the absence of the friend, even while I enjoyed the pleasure of her correspondence. The kind assurance you gave me, that you passed your time agreeably here, encourages me to hope for a longer visit next year. The sweetest reveries are composed of recollections of the agreeable past, and

hopes of the happy future; and I thank you most sincerely for the days you have given up, and those I hope you will bestow upon me. Indeed words cannot express the delightful impressions you left behind you. Montagu and I often talk over those happy days with grateful pleasure.

Dr. Beattie and his son did not stay here so long with us as I had hoped; the Doctor's physicians having ordered him to take a course of sea-bathing, before his duties, as a professor, call him to the university at Aberdeen. His wife's unhappy state of mind, and his own great application to study, have sadly affected his spirits and health; and his son, yet a boy, partly perhaps from sympathy with a sick father, and partly by constitution, is much more serious and grave than one would wish so young a person, or indeed any one to be; for though I honour the precept which teaches to be wise and merry, I think to be merry when wise is nearly as good doctrine. The Doctor's *Edwin is no vulgar boy;* he is an admirable scholar; has uncommon talents and a most excellent heart. A little folly, whisked up into a light froth of youthful gaiety, would be what I should ask of *les jeux et les ris* for him, rather than any further favours Minerva or the learned Nine could bestow.

I am surprised and charmed with your account of the poetical milk-woman. After having considered her character with admiration, a certain selfish principle (which can never be long suspended) suggested to me, that I might obtain great pleasure if I could be the means of promoting her pros-

perity. I beg of you to inform yourself, as much as you can, of her temper, disposition, and moral character. I speak not this out of an apprehension of merely wasting a few guineas, but lest I should do harm where I intend to confer benefit. It has sometimes happened to me, that, by an endeavour to encourage talents and cherish virtue, by driving from them the terrifying spectre of pale poverty, I have introduced a legion of little demons: vanity, luxury, idleness, and pride, have entered the cottage the moment poverty vanished. However, I am sure despair is never a good counsellor; and I desire you to be so good as to tell her, that I entreat her, in any distress, to apply to me, and she may be assured of immediate assistance.

The Primate of Ireland has been at Sundridge ever since he left Sandleford, and I believe, from some other engagements, he cannot be here before the end, or, at soonest, the middle of next month; so I wrote yesterday to Mrs. Garrick, to endeavour to prevail on her to take a trip to Sandleford, for her room is now vacant, and so is yours; and you are just those persons of whom one never can say, their room is as good as their company. Hampton is but two stages from Sandleford; Bristol, I confess, is more distant; but should you make a visit at Dr. Stonehouse's, I might entertain hopes you would allow me to send my post-chaise to fetch you.

Affectionately yours,

E. MONTAGU.

The person alluded to in the preceding letter, was equally a stranger to gratitude and prudence; and inflated by the notice she had attracted, soon began, to express, in the coarsest terms, her rage and disappointment, at not having the sum subscribed immediately put into her hands. Neither could she bear, as it seems, to be represented to the public, in Miss More's preface to her work, as an object of its charity. Not being able to gain her point, she soon broke out into the bitterest invectives, and scrupled at no calumnies however absurd and ferocious. We will produce a specimen. The late Duchess of Devonshire having presented her with 'Bell's Edition of the Poets,' Miss H. More kept them for her till she should be able to find a few second-hand shelves to place them on. Mrs. Yearsley immediately wrote to her Grace, complaining that they were kept back from her; at the same time spreading a report in the neighbourhood, that her patroness was purchasing an estate with the sum she had pretended to raise for her benefit. Mrs. Montagu and Miss More resisted with great patience her violent importunities to be put in possession of the principal, as well as interest, of her little fortune; fearing it would be consumed in those vices, to which it now began to be apparent that she was addicted. But at length they gave it up into the hands of a respectable lawyer, who made it over to a rich and honourable merchant of Bristol; and he was soon harassed into the relinquishment of the whole concern. Miss More, as may well be imagined, never took the

trouble of vindicating herself, nor did she manifest any resentment towards this unfortunate creature, with respect to whom she had no other feeling than that of Christian sorrow for her depravity.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Sandleford, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,

Mr. Parsons of Bath having, without orders, sent my gothic stone ornaments to London, I have not any occasion to send a carriage to Bath for them. I imagine my house in Portman Square will be as much offended at the arrival of gothic ornaments, as a court beau would be if a hatter sent him a quaker's broad-brimmed beaver. They were designed to adorn the west-front of Sandleford, of gothic structure, and to signify to all who approached it, that ancient simplicity and hospitality resided there, and a homely and sincere reception awaited them, if they would do the mistress of the mansion the favour to walk in. These pinnacles on the battlements invite to roast beef and plumb-pudding, but could never allure to a *thé*.

I am truly grieved for Mrs. Garrick's loss of her little darling: greater sorrow attends the loss of our hopes, perhaps, than even the deprivation of our most valuable possessions, and never does hope clothe itself in such a perfect form of beauty as in an infant. We dress it out with every excellence, and fashion it to the utmost degree of

perfection. I wrote to solicit her to come to Sandleford, where sympathy would share and console her sorrow; for when I would reason with her on the subject, she could not say *she speaks to one who never lost a child.* I have this morning received a letter from her, in which she tells me she is engaged at present, but gives me hopes, that between this time and autumn, she will give me the pleasure of seeing her. It would add much to my happiness, and her consolation, if you would meet her. I feel great wrath and indignation at your Missy; great is the injury she has done at Mongewell and Sandleford; so great, that no punishment could be adequate to it but what she incurred by losing an opportunity of passing some days with you. She has deprived herself of what we regret, though perhaps her loss does not bear any proportion to our's; for there are some ears which the lute of Apollo would not charm more than the bagpipe of a pedlar.

I rejoice with you that we are soon to be free from any connection with the milk-woman. I have the same opinion about favours to the ungrateful-minded, as the common people have in regard to witches, that bestowing a gift on such wretches gives them power over one; but for all that, I shall never be discouraged from giving to the distressed person of talents while I have anything to give: but I can only assist the woman, you can help the poet; your patronage is therefore worth infinitely more than my alms, and I grieve that you have given her so much precious thought

and precious time. I should always, even from a selfish principle, wish rather to be the dupe of another's hypocrisy than of my own suspicion. The dupes of suspicion are cheated of the best things in human society, confidence and benevolence. I know these very persons think themselves wondrous wise, but they cannot be merry and wise if their wisdom is always apprehensive of deceit and guile.

Mrs. Yearsley's conceit that you can envy her talents gives me comfort; for as it convinces me that she is mad, I build upon it a hope that she is not guilty in the all-seeing eye.

Our dear Vesey has been very ill, owing, she tells me, to eating unripe fruit; but, thank God, she is getting well again. You make her very happy when you favour her with a letter, and, poor thing, she is in a very dejected state, so it is an act of charity to write to her. She is charmed with your description of your cottage, and wishes much to be mistress of one, and I will endeavour next summer to search one out in this neighbourhood: she would be amused with fitting it up: in the possession of it, when finished, I am afraid she would be disappointed; a cottage affords a sweet retreat to the contented mind, or a charming indulgence *to the scholar's melancholy, which is fantastical,* but affords little diversion to real sorrow, connected with departed friends, and substantial evils arising from the course of human things.

My nephew and his amiable wife left me yesterday morning, to fulfil an engagement they had

made with the York family, to spend some weeks at Lymington: the loss of two such lively good-humoured young persons makes my house appear very dull;—there is now no noise of mirth,

Save the cricket on the hearth.

You hardly inquire after what has been done at this place since you saw it. I seem to have copied the mode of modern parents—I have embellished the external, and neglected the furnishing of the internal: the pleasure grounds are much improved since you were here. The view to new beauties is opened, and some ugly old buildings are taken away; but the circumstance of the ill-built chimnies made it impossible to get the house into good habitable order this summer. I beg that you would not make any apologies for having interested me for *l'ingrate;* it is impossible a heart like yours should form to itself the idea of such a creature. *Goodness thinks no ill where no ill seems.*

I beg you to present my compliments to all your family; assure them I have not forgotten the agreeable day I passed with them.

I am impatient to hear that you think of coming to town. If any old maiden at Bristol keeps parrots or macaws, I should be very glad of their cast-off clothes, or any gay feathers, to adorn the feather-work which is going on here.

I am, dear Madam,
with most affectionate esteem,
Yours,
E. MONTAGU.

Miss H. More again paid her customary visit to Mrs. Garrick, at the latter end of this year, 1784, the first few weeks of which she passed, as usual, at Hampton, in such seclusion as to furnish few incidents to enliven her correspondence.

Hampton, December, 1784.

Poor dear Johnson! he is past all hope. The dropsy has brought him to the point of death; his legs have been scarified: but nothing will do. I have, however, the comfort to hear that his dread of dying is in a great measure subdued; and now he says "the bitterness of death is past." He sent the other day for Sir Joshua; and after much serious conversation told him he had three favours to beg of him, and he hoped he would not refuse a dying friend, be they what they would. Sir Joshua promised. The first was, that he would never paint on a Sunday; the second, that he would forgive him thirty pounds which he had lent him, as he wanted to leave them to a distressed family; the third was, that he would read the Bible whenever he had an opportunity; and that he would never omit it on a Sunday. There was no difficulty but upon the *first* point; but at length, Sir Joshua promised to gratify him in all. How delighted should I be to hear the dying discourse of this great and good man, especially now that faith has subdued his fears. I wish I could see him.

As the very interesting particulars contained in

the following letter,[1] found among Mrs. H. More's papers, may not be generally known, we shall perhaps be excused for interrupting the series of her letters by its insertion.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I ought to apologize for delaying so long to gratify your wishes and fulfil my promise, by committing to paper a conversation which I had with the late Rev. Mr. Storry, of Colchester, respecting Dr. Johnson. I will now, however, proceed at once to record, to the best of my recollection, the substance of our discourse.

We were riding together near Colchester, when I asked Mr. Storry whether he had ever heard that Dr. Johnson expressed great dissatisfaction with himself on the approach of death; and that in reply to friends, who, in order to comfort him spoke of his writings in defence of virtue and religion, he had said, 'admitting all you urge to be true, how can I tell when I have done enough.'

Mr. S. assured me that what I had just mentioned was perfectly correct; and then added the following interesting particulars.

Dr. Johnson, said he, did feel as you describe, and was not to be comforted by the ordinary topics of consolation which were addressed to him. In consequence he desired to see a clergyman, and

[1] Since ascertained to have been written by the Rev. J. Sangar, who formerly officiated at Colne Engayne, near Colchester, and afterwards at St. Werburgh's, Bristol, and who died on the 4th July, 1818; a man of great worth and great talents, well remembered, and much regretted.

particularly described the views and character of the person whom he wished to consult. After some consideration, a Mr. Winstanley was named, and the Dr. requested Sir John Hawkins to write a note in his name, requesting Mr. W.'s attendance as a minister.

Mr. W. who was in a very weak state of health, was quite overpowered on receiving the note, and felt appalled by the very thought of encountering the talents and learning of Dr. Johnson. In his embarrassment he went to his friend Colonel Pownall, and told him what had happened, asking, at the same time, for his advice how to act. The Colonel, who was a pious man, urged him immediately to follow what appeared to be a remarkable leading of Providence, and for the time argued his friend out of his nervous apprehension: but after he had left Colonel Pownall, Mr. W.'s fears returned in so great a degree as to prevail upon him to abandon the thought of a personal interview with the Dr. He determined in consequence to write him a letter: that letter I think Mr. Storry said he had seen,—at least a copy of it, and part of it he repeated to me as follows:—

Sir—I beg to acknowledge the honour of your note, and am very sorry that the state of my health prevents my compliance with your request: but my nerves are so shattered that I feel as if I should be quite confounded by your presence, and instead of promoting, should only injure the cause in which you desire my aid. Permit me therefore to write what I should wish to say were I present. I can

easily conceive what would be the subjects of your inquiry. I can conceive that the views of yourself have changed with your condition, and that on the near approach of death, what you once considered mere peccadilloes have arisen into mountains of guilt, whilst your best actions have dwindled into nothing. On whichever side you look, you see only positive transgressions or defective obedience; and hence, in self-despair are eagerly inquiring, "What shall I do to be saved?" I say to you in the language of the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God!" &c, &c.

When Sir John Hawkins came to this part of Mr. W.'s letter, the Dr. interrupted him, anxiously asking, '*Does he say so?* Read it again! Sir John.' Sir John complied: upon which the Dr. said, 'I must see that man; write again to him.' A second note was accordingly sent: but even this repeated solicitation could not prevail over Mr. Winstanley's fears. He was led, however, by it to write again to the Doctor, renewing and enlarging upon the subject of his first letter; and these communications, together with the conversation of the late Mr. Latrobe, who was a particular friend of Dr. Johnson, appear to have been blessed by God in bringing this great man to the renunciation of self, and a simple reliance on Jesus as his Saviour; thus also communicating to him that peace which he had found the world could not give, and which, when the world was fading from his view, was sufficient to fill the void, and dissipate the gloom, even of the valley of the shadow of death.

I cannot conclude without remarking what honour God has hereby put upon the doctrine of faith in a crucified Saviour. The man whose intellectual powers had awed all around him, was in his turn made to tremble, when the period arrived at which all knowledge appears useless, and vanishes away, except the knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he has sent. Effectually to attain this knowledge, this giant in literature must become a little child. The man looked up to as a prodigy of wisdom, must become a fool that he might be wise.

What a comment is this upon that word, "The loftiness of men shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Hampton, January 7, 1785.

I hope you have gotten the better of the poetical indigestion you must have experienced at Thames Ditton,[1] from my having crammed you with bad verses. Unluckily for you and my other gentle readers, within an hour after we parted I began to exhibit an exact imitation of Mrs. Garrick's cold, which I copied so successfully in all its parts, that I might have passed for the original, if she had not coughed and croaked precisely in the same hoarse note before me. Now this having confined

[1] At the Hon. Mrs. Boyle Walsingham's.

me a close prisoner to my room ever since, there has been of course

> Room for writing verses e'en to madness,
> Till the pen split with copying.

Now if I were able to *walk*, you may believe I should never write a line while there was a gleam of sun, or a blade of grass, to cheer my heart, or delight my eyes. But as I cannot walk, I must write, and you must read: the consequence is not pleasant, but it is logical; and so if I act reasonably I care not if you be punished barbarously. Yet I think I have spent my time as harmlessly as any of you. While you are talking crabbed politics, I am reducing perverse syllables to obedience. Some of your wits have spent their time worse. I had rather be Cinna[1] the poet, than Cinna the conspirator: and if I *must be torn* I had rather it were for my bad verses, than for my malefactions.

But to come to business, which I meant to have done long ago. By the bye, I do not think you will find time to read this idle stuff till summer, so I would have you desire Mrs. Pepys to pack it up, unread, among the things that are to go to Tunbridge, and there I suppose you are now and then furiously at leisure, as I am at this moment, to your misfortune. Oh! how you fret, and wish it were the rheumatism in my hand, or a defluxion in my eyes, which confined me! But I have done

[1] See Shakspeare's Julius Cæsar.

wandering from the matter in hand—and now for the verses. What verses again?

'She stops my chariot and she boards my barge.'

Well, but you must correct me now, for your own credit, or I will serve you as the milk-woman did me, and declare that all the bad lines are yours.

Do you still persist in the opinion that my name must 'stand Rubric on the Post,' and that Bas Bleu should be also printed?

I have been brushing the dust off these blue stockings a little, and have added a few stitches to them. Pray look at my work; perhaps you will say, I had better have let it alone. I always say too much. If I had fallen into the hands of Procrustes, I should never have been *stretched* on his bed; but for *curtailment*,—Oh dear! what continual amputation! There would always have been too much of me, and I should have grown out again under his chopping-knife. I could not resist the temptation of bringing my great favourites Joseph of Winton, and Thomas of Oxenford into the amiable society at Mrs. Vesey's. Still less could I resist making the *eloge* of wit suppressed from reverence to virtue; a merit so great and so obvious that I am surprised not to have seen it mentioned by any writer that I recollect. Do not spare me—the only merit I have is the delight I take in being corrected; and the next praise to *being* good is the desire of *becoming* so.

Kind compliments to Mrs. Pepys. Mrs. Garrick sends her's.

Pray return this by post to Hampton as soon as you have made it better.

Your's faithfully,

H. MORE.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Most sincere are my congratulations on the health and safety of your very amiable lady. The interval must have been painful and anxious, but I thank God that the termination has been so happy. I am always glad when a numerous family happens (though, by the bye, I am persuaded that nothing *happens*) to be sent into a quarter where I am sure they will be well educated. Where this is the case, I have always remarked, in my small observation of human life, that large families were more virtuous, more happy, and even, as to the things of this world, more prosperous, than those in which there is a single solitary cub to plague his parents, despise his tutors, and torment his dependants. Such a little opulent important animal I have seldom known escape the miseries of an education which is poisoned in the very springs.

I have the mortification to find that my cottage will not be ready for me this summer. I spent the day there on Monday, and the wizard of the mountain brewed up a glorious storm for me. To the most magnificent thunder was added the literal completion of that fine description, "If he do but

touch the mountains they shall smoke." This smoke was the consequence of the most violent rains falling on the parched and burning hills, and furnished a more sublime and poetic delight than the brightest day could have bestowed. But *one* day of such enjoyment is enough. All sublimities should be short; the mind cannot be transported long, and it is glad to recover its natural and ordinary train: a passive sort of content is the best state.

I shall be greatly obliged to you for the book you are so good as to propose to send me. I am fitting up a tiny boudoir at Cowslip Green, which I intend shall contain no literature but the offerings of kindness; by this means my imagination will convert my little closet into a temple of friendship; and when the weather is bad, or my spirits low, what a cordial it will be to fancy that I am loved and esteemed by so many amiable and worthy people as have there contributed to my instruction and delight! I am mightily at a loss to know what book *you* shall give me: I have been thinking these two hours to no purpose. What think you of a cookery book? No, that won't do either, for that will introduce sauces, and luxury, and all manner of cunningly-devised dishes and extravagant inventions, into a little cottage devoted to simplicity, and from which aspiring thoughts and luxurious desires are to be entirely excluded. I should beg a wooden spoon and a maple dish, but that it is pleasanter to one's friends to be remembered in one's more intellectual hours. What say you to a book I have seen advertised, called *The way to be rich and respectable?* Such

a work; I think, might help to counteract the ev' effects of some of its poetical neighbours, which suggest vain fancies and high imaginations. But pray take notice, it must not be a *fine new* book out of a shop; that would destroy the charm, which lies in this, that the book must be transplanted from the library of the friend.

I happen to have so much acquaintance at the Wells this summer, that I have not yet found a single day of the leisure I sigh for. Some very agreeable foreigners have been of our party, the Russian Prince Galitzin, and the most amiable Frenchman I ever knew, his *compagnon de voyage.*

We have a pleasant prospect in view, but whether it will take place, the uncertainty of human things leaves it not in my power to say; Mrs. Walsingham, Mrs. Garrick and I meditate a journey to the Lakes of Cumberland. To me, at least, whose eyes have not been feasted with the scenery of Switzerland, it will be a very new and interesting affair.

When do you take your flight to Mount Ephraim? Hitherto you have not lost much, for the country was never less delightful; but, since the rain, it begins to assume a new character of life and cheerfulness.

Pray remember me kindly to Mrs. Pepys, and desire the sweet little boy not to forget me.

I am your much obliged, &c.

H. More.

I am come to the postscript, without having found courage to tell you what I am sure you will hear

with pain; at least it gives *me* infinite pain to write it—I mean the most open and notorious ingratitude of our milk-woman. There is hardly a species of slander the poor unhappy creature does not propagate against me, in the most public manner, because I have called her a *milk-woman,* and because I have placed the money in the funds, instead of letting her spend it. I confess my weakness—it goes to my heart, not for my own sake, but for the sake of our common nature; so much for my *inward* feelings: as to my *active* resentment, I am trying to get a place for her husband, and am endeavouring to make up the sum I have raised for her to five hundred pounds. Do not let this harden *your* heart or mine against any future object. *Fate bene per voi,* is a beautiful maxim.

One of her charges is that I design to defraud her children of the money after her death;—and this to my face, the second time she saw me after I came hither. Poor human nature! I could weep over thee! Nothing but the sanctifying influences of religion can subdue and keep in tolerable order that pride which is the concomitant of great talents with a bad education.

I have this moment a letter from Madame de Genlis, to say she cannot come to Bristol.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. E. Carter.

Bristol, 1785.

You will judge of the satisfaction and comfort I have in receiving your letters, my dear Mrs. Carter,

from the promptness of my answers. Yet I must confess that would sometimes be a very unfair way of estimating affection, as a thousand cross things often prevent the accomplishment of the kindest intentions of that sort: and by a perverseness of circumstances, the dearest friend is sometimes neglected, while the most frivolous acquaintance engages one's time and attention.

I am rejoiced to find by a letter I have just received from Mrs. Montagu, that our dear Mrs. Vesey will have a competency, though nothing like the affluence to which she has been accustomed, and to which she had so good a right.

Indeed, my dear friend, I can judge by my own, of the grief and surprise you must have felt at the death of the Duchess of Portland. She was of the noble and munificent style of the old nobility. She is deservedly regretted, from the palace to the cottage; the poor deeply lament her, and *Majesty* has shed tears for her. Dear Mrs. Delany, I hear, sustains this heavy blow with the resignation which might be expected from the piety of her character; but she also feels it with a sensibility which might be calculated from the tenderness of her heart. You would be glad to learn that she is now with Mrs. Boscawen, at her villa, receiving such consolations as real friendship, a feeling heart, and a very solid piety can administer. I fear we must hardly expect to see her again.[1] Were you not a little surprised to hear that the duchess

[1] Mrs. Delany lived till 1788.

had left her nothing but her picture? I am told she is quite satisfied, as it furnishes the strongest proof that her attachment was a disinterested one.

I have been a good deal hurried and taken up lately, from having had a great deal of acquaintance at the Wells; and as water-drinkers have nothing to do themselves, they are very apt to invade the time of those who have. But I reward myself for these losses, by frequently enjoying the solid and instructive society of Lady Juliana Penn, whom I am so happy as to have within a little walk, and who is so good as to bestow her time upon me sometimes. Miss Penn is a charming girl, full of sense and information, without being so smothered with accomplishments as most of the young misses are; and which they impose upon you as a substitute for knowledge. They are full of care on account of Lady Charlotte Finch, and Mrs. Fielding, whose healths are not in a good state.

I am on the point of embarking on an expedition, which I figure to myself will be a marvellously pleasant one. I am going, with Mrs. Walsingham and Mrs. Garrick, to see the Lakes in Cumberland, &c.[1] I promise a great banquet to my imagination, in the enjoyment of that bold and romantic scenery, so far surpassing anything I have yet seen; though this country is not a tame one.

It seems Mrs. Montagu has given you a little sketch of our milk-woman's history; if she had not,

[1] This scheme was never carried into execution.

I believe I should have spared you the vexation of knowing that your generous exertions and kind liberality have met with so cruel a return. I grieve most for poor fallen human nature; for, as to my own particular part, I am persuaded Providence intends me good by it. Had she turned out well I should have had my *reward;* as it is, I have my *trial.* Perhaps I was too vain of my success; and, in counting over the money (almost £500.), might be elated, and think—"Is not this great Babylon that *I* have built?"

Prosperity is a great trial, and she could not stand it. I was afraid it would turn her *head,* but I did not expect it would harden her *heart.* I contrive to take the same care of her pecuniary interests, and am bringing out a second edition of her poems. My conscience tells me I ought not to give up my trust for these poor children, on account of their mother's wickedness. You know, Mrs. Montagu and I are joint trustees for the money.

I am grieved to take up your precious time with this mortifying story. It will not steel *your* heart, nor, I trust, *mine,* against the next distress which may present itself to us; but there are many on whom I fear it may have that effect.

My sisters desire their best respects. Pray take care of your health; and believe me, my dearest Mrs. Carter,

Your ever affectionate and faithful,

H. More.

H. More to her Sister.

1785.

Mrs. Garrick is gone to town again for one night, to attend mass, but I desired to stay behind. Mr. Pepys wrote me a very kind letter on the death of Johnson, thinking I should be impatient to hear something relating to his last hours. Dr. Brocklesby, his physician, was with him. He said to him, a little before he died, Doctor, you are a worthy man, and my friend, but I am afraid you are not a Christian! what can I do better for you than offer up in your presence, a prayer to the great God that you may become a Christian in my sense of the word. Instantly he fell on his knees, and put up a fervent prayer; when he got up he caught hold of his hand with great earnestness, and cried, Doctor! you do not say, Amen. The Doctor looked foolish, but after a pause, cried, Amen! Johnson said, 'My dear doctor! believe a dying man, there is no salvation but in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God; go home, write down my prayer, and every word I have said, and bring it me to-morrow.' Brocklesby did so.

A friend desired he would make his will, and as Hume in his last moments had made an impious declaration of his opinions, he thought it might tend to counteract the poison, if Johnson would make a public confession of his faith in his will. He said he would; seized the pen with great earnestness, and asked what was the usual form of beginning a

will? His friend told him. After the usual forms he wrote, 'I offer up my soul to the great and merciful God; I offer it full of pollution, but in full assurance that it will be cleansed in the blood of my Redeemer.' And for some time he wrote on with the same vigour and spirit as if he had been in perfect health. When he expressed some of his former dread of dying, Sir John said, If you, doctor, have these fears, what is to become of me and others? Oh! Sir, said he, I have *written* piously, it is true; but I have *lived* too much like other men. It was a consolation to him, however, in his last hours, that he had never written in derogation of religion or virtue. He talked of his death and funeral, at times, with great composure. On the Monday morning, he fell into a sound sleep, and continued in that state for twelve hours, and then died without a groan.

No action of his life became him like the leaving it. His death makes a kind of era in literature. Piety and goodness will not easily find a more able defender, and it is delightful to see him set, as it were, his dying seal to the professions of his life, and to the truth of Christianity.

I now recollect with melancholy pleasure, two little anecdotes of this departed genius, indicating a zeal for religion which one cannot but admire, however characteristically rough. When the Abbé Raynal was introduced to him, upon the Abbé's advancing to take his hand, Doctor J. drew back and put his hands behind him, and afterwards replied to the expostulation of a friend,—'Sir, I will

not shake hands with an infidel!' At another time, I remember asking him if he did not think the Dean of Derry a very agreeable man, to which he made no answer, and on my repeating my question, 'Child,' said he, 'I will not say any thing in favour of a Sabbath-breaker, to please you, nor any one else.'

From the same to the same.

London, 1785.

On Friday I was invited to a very agreeable party at Mrs. Vesey's, to hear Mr. Sheridan[1] read. He gave us the beautiful, but hackneyed Church Yard Elegy, Jessy, Dryden's Ode, the Morning Hymn, and every thing that every body could say by heart. He was sensible, but pedantic, as usual. He abused all the English Poets, because none of them *had written to the heart.* I was sitting between Soame Jenyns and the Bishop of Chester, both poets, and I was very angry with them that they did not defend the cause of the injured fraternity. They, on the contrary, accused me of pusillanimity. I told them, like Beatrice, 'I would I were a man,' but not being one, I did not care to say much in so large and learned an assembly. However, lest Sheridan should think himself victorious, if no one contradicted him, I did venture to say a little, referring him to the dramatic poets, Shakspeare, Otway, and Southerne; the tragic

[1] Father of Richard B. Sheridan.

drama being here, as in almost all countries, the natural field of the pathetic poets.

The French ambassador yesterday at court, just at the drawing-room door, fell into an apoplectic fit. I wonder if it struck anybody present in any other view than that it would spoil his assembly last night (SUNDAY), the day on which he regularly holds a faro bank! One would think they could not have had a more solemn and public summons to recollection. But the profligacy, folly, and madness of this town is beyond the conception of those who *do not* see it, and the patience of those who *do*.

On Monday we had a gala dinner at Mrs. Walsingham's. The Montagus, the Lord Primate, Lord Walsingham, the Bishop of Salisbury, Lælius, and others of that order; but it was too grand to be comfortable, and too numerous to be instructive.

From the same to the same.

London, 1785.

I believe I mentioned that a foreign ambassador, Count Adhemar, had a stroke of apoplexy, and that he was to have had a great assembly on the night of the day on which it happened; it is shocking to relate the sequel. It was on a Sunday. The company went—some hundreds. The man lay deprived of sense and motion. His bed-chamber joins the great drawing-room, where was a faro bank held close to his bed's-head. Somebody said they thought they made too much noise. Oh no! another answered,

it will do him good; the worst thing he can do is to sleep. A third said, I did not think Adhemar had been a fellow of such rare spirit; palsy and faro together is spirited indeed; this is keeping it up! I was telling this to Mr. Walpole the other day, and lamenting it as a national stigma, and one of the worst signs of the times I had met with. In return he told me of a French gentleman at Paris, who being in the article of death, had just signed his will, when the lawyer, who drew it up, was invited by the wife to stay supper. The table was laid in the dying man's apartment; the lawyer took a glass of wine, and addressing himself to the lady, drank *a la santé de notre amiable agonisant!* I told Mr. Walpole he invented the story to out-do me, but he protested it was literally true.

I am charmed with Professor White's Bampton Lectures, full of genius, learning, sterling sense, a manly style, and a good temper. The subject is a parallel between the life, character, and doctrines of Mahomet, and those of Christ; a subject to which he was naturally led by his studies as Arabic professor. Those writers who have depreciated the capacity of the impostor, have not served the cause of Christianity. For as they lower his claims to understanding, they raise his pretensions to inspiration.

You know I have often told you, that Sunday is not only my day of rest, but of enjoyment. I go twice to the churches where I expect the best preaching; frequently to St. Clement's, to hear my excellent friend, Burrowes. By the way, it gives me

peculiar pleasure to think that I there partook of the holy sacrament with Johnson the last time he ever received it in public.

It was very considerate in Mrs. Garrick, to decline asking company on Sunday on my account; so that I enjoy the whole day to myself. I swallow no small portion of theology of different descriptions, as I always read when visiting, such books as I do not possess at home. After my more select reading, I have attacked South, Atterbury, and Warburton. In these great geniuses, and original thinkers, I see many passages of scripture presented in a strong and striking light. I think it right to mix their learned labours with the devout effusions of more spiritual writers, Baxter, Doddridge, Hall, Hopkins, Jeremy Taylor, (the Shakspeare of divinity) and the profound Barrow in turn. I devour much, but, I fear, digest little. In the evening I read a sermon and prayers to the family; which Mrs. G. much likes.

The Middletons inquired after you. They were at the bishop's. I did but just see Sir Charles. He stept in to us once or twice in the course of the evening, from the House of Commons, which is close by, and so did two or three other members, to relieve themselves a little from the Westminster Petition; odious and tiresome subject! they say.

From the same to the same.

London, Monday, 1785.

Talking of politics the other night, Soame Jenyns said it sounded mighty pretty in an essay, to talk of the governor of a free people, but when put into English, it only signified the governor of a people who would not be governed, which was the definition of the king of England. Mr. Walpole has been confined some time with a cruel fit of the gout. Mrs. Vesey, going to visit him in his great chair, fell down stairs, and sprained her leg. I dined with her two days since, in a snug way, with only Mrs. Carter. *She,* poor lady, is lame with the rheumatism. Mrs. Montagu has kept her room these three weeks; so that the Bas Bleu is *very much out at heel.* I went and sat the evening with Mrs. Montagu, *tête-a-tête.*

As the oldest acquaintances, however humble in station, are always considered by me as having the first right to my services, I offered myself to our two friends the first day of my coming. I went next to the Bishop of Chester's, and we were vastly glad to see each other.

From the same to the same.

Thursday morning.

Lord Bathurst has given me, for your book, two original letters of Voltaire's in English, one written to him when he was chancellor, and the other to his

father above fifty years ago, to thank him for the civilities he received at his house when in England. My lord is very obliging, and has taken an infinite deal of pains to rummage out these letters from among his vast mass of papers. I have been there twice this week. Our blue stocking is tolerably well mended again. We have had a pleasant *Vesey* or two lately. Mrs. Carter, Mr. Walpole, and I, make our own parties, and ask, or exclude, just whom we like. Our last was a little too large, and had too many great ladies; and we have agreed to keep the next a secret; but poor dear Vesey is so sweet-temperëd and benevolent, that though she vows she will not mention it to anybody, she cannot help asking every agreeable creature that comes in her way.

Frivolous as the times are, I have some comfort in thinking that the monstrous attempt at bringing Macbeth into a dance at the Opera, would not take. I was extremely outrageous at this, and said the other day to Lady Mount Edgecombe, that the times were so depraved I expected to live to see the Iliad cut down into an interlude. 'Yes,' replied she, 'and it will be the only way in which some of our young men will learn the classics.' The frequent fires here are dreadful. I have been to look on the ruins of the Thatched House; but sweet Wimbledon[1] is the most grievous loss. They went from London by fifties to plunder; and while the house was in flames, multitudes were dead

[1] Lord Spencer's.

drunk in the cellars. It makes one ashamed of one's species. 'Yet, there go I,' said holy John Bradford, when he met a man going to the gallows, 'but for the grace of God.'

I am just going to flirt a couple of hours with my beau, General Oglethorpe. Enclosed you have my letter written as from Jean Jacques Rousseau. I could not comply with your desire sooner, as Mr. H. ran away with it.[1]

LETTRE DE JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU, AVEC SON PORTRAIT.

Ame sensible! Voici le portrait d'un homme dont tu as su apprécier le mérite. J'étois digne de l'admiration de mon siècle, et je l'ai obténu; c'étoit peu; j'ai voulu qu'on me dressât des autels. Je pensois que le seul objet digne du cûlte humain étoit Jean Jacques. J'aufois voulu qu'il n'y eût eu que Jean Jacques dans l'univers; que lui seul tint lieu de tout le genre humain. N'ayant pû être l'objet de l'adoration des hommes j'ai voulu être celui de leurs persécutions; j'aimois mieux être persecuté que negligé; la calomnie m'outrageoit, mais l'oubli m'auroit assommé.

[1] This supposed letter was addressed to a gentleman who was fascinated, to a very dangerous degree, by the talents of that great, but corrupt genius, and was accompanied by a trumpery picture of him, which she had picked up merely for this purpose. Madame de Stael having formerly presented Mrs. More with her work on Rousseau, she suffered a copy of this letter to be shown to her when she was in England, and had expressed an intention of visiting Barley Wood, that she might be fully apprised of her opinion of his character and writings.

Je réunissois en moi tout ce que le cœur humain a de plus noble et de plus bas: Enthousiaste pour ce que la vertu a de grand, de sublime, d'impratiquable même, je me crûs autorisé à franchir les bornes prescrites aux âmes ordinaires. Ayant fait l'éloge de la chasteté j'ai vécu dans un commerce illicite avec une femme dont j'ai celebré la pureté. J'ai senti, j'ai écrit comme Platon, mais ma vie fût celle d'un homme ordinaire, d'un homme vil.

Tous mes goûts furent des passions; mais j'avois des accés de la plus sublime dévotion. J'admirois tout ce que la réligion avoit de brillant, mais je redoutois ce qu'elle avoit de pénible.

Sensible, tendre, inégal, capricieux, inconséquent, j'ai fait l'apothéose du genre humain sans aimer les hommes. J'ai consacré à l'immortalité des gens méprisables, et j'ai maltraité ceux qui m'ont fait du bien. Me rendre service c'étoit me faire un affront sanglant; je savois pardonner une injure et non un bienfait.

Quant à mes écrits, celui qui pourra les lire sans ravissement doit avoir le cœur froid et dur, l'esprit borné et frivole. Quel feu divin! quelle passion! quelles graces naïves et tendres! Pour lire les autres auteurs il ne faut que du goût, pour savourer Jean Jacques il faudroit une âme; pour lire les autres il faudroit juger, pour lire Rousseau il faut sentir.

Je n'ai pas voulu faire du mal peut-être, et j'en ai fait; plus vain qu'incrédule je croyois n'aimer que la verité, et j'ai aimé encore plus la singularité; j'ai voulu me distinguer, j'ai voulu être philo-

sophe, je me suis perdu dans l'abyme de la métaphisique.

Citoyen du monde! homme de bien! ami du genre humain! Philosophe! voilà les beaux titres auxquels j'aspirois; mais souvent quand je croyois débiter la morale je n'étalois que du sentiment; clinquant qui brille d'avantage mais qui n'a rien de solide.

From the same to the same.

Adelphi, 1785.

Boswell tells me he is printing *anecdotes* of Johnson; not his *life*, but, as he has the vanity to call it, his *pyramid*. I besought his tenderness for our virtuous and most revered departed friend, and begged he would mitigate some of his asperities. He said, roughly, 'He would not cut off his claws, nor make a tiger a cat to please anybody.' It will, I doubt not, be a very amusing book; but I hope not an indiscreet one: he has great enthusiasm, and some fire. The Bishop of Gloucester, (Dr. Halifax,) did me the honour of calling upon me. I have since been there of an evening, and we are become great friends: they seem amiable people.

I have had a great deal of conversation with Mr. Anstey. I found him obliging and polite, but he is one of those poets who are better to read than to see. I think him a real genius in the way of wit and humour; but he appears to be of a shy and silent cast, and to prefer the quiet solemnity of a whist table to talking parties. On Wednesday we

had a great dinner at home, for the first time this year, Mrs. Garrick disliking company more and more. The party consisted of the Smelts, the Montagus, the Boyles, the Walsinghams, Mrs. Carter, Mr. Walpole, and Miss Hamilton. Though I like them every one separately, yet it was impossible to enjoy them altogether. I never desire to sit down with more than six, or eight at the outside, at dinner. I have had an affecting business on my hands. The wife of Dr. Adams, Master of Pem broke College, is dead, and his friends prevailed on him to set out for London, to be out of the way during the last sad ceremonies; so he came to the hotel next to us, in order for me to devote myself to him as much as possible. Our first meeting was very affecting. I never saw anything so meek and so resigned. But it is a heavy blow at almost eighty!

We had a splendid dinner in Stratford-place,[1] indeed much too magnificent, and too many people for comfort; all literati. Among them Sir Joshua, the two Wartons, and Tyrwhitt. Dr. Warton was, as usual, very enthusiastic and very agreeable. We staid till near twelve. Mrs. Montagu, in a whisper, engaged us to dine privately with her the next day; so we staid on purpose, and had nobody but dear Mrs. Carter; which I liked vastly. We spent the evening at Mrs. Vesey's last Thursday, with Mr. Walpole and Dowager Lady Townsend; a woman who has *said* more good things than any

[1] Mrs. Walsingham's.

living person, but who, I believe, has not done quite so many. Poor Mr. —— could not talk much; but he seemed to enjoy the conversation. When I shook hands with him, I said to myself, 'I shall never see you again;' and so it is likely to prove; for he has lain senseless ever since. Poor man! he has not the dispositions suited to his advanced age, and his near prospect of death. Soame Jenyns, too, is in great trouble. We spent the evening agreeably together, and Mrs. Jenyns was taken that very night with a fever, and is dangerously ill. I tremble for an event which is to destroy an union of such perfect harmony, and put an end to an attachment which continues to be a passion very long after fourscore.

Sir Charles and Lady Middleton dined here last Tuesday, and in the evening we had a magnificent *bas bleu*, at which I think assisted almost every creature that adorns that fraternity. We had much pleasant and some profitable discussion.

From the same to the same.

Glanvilla,[1] *June* 16, 1785.

We left Teston on Monday. Poor Lady Middleton still in bed with a fever! the only drawback from a visit which was otherwise so delightful. It is a charming mansion. We spent the evening with Miss Hamilton; who, I fancy, will have another name by the time you get this letter. I was much

[1] Mrs. Boscawen's seat.

amused with hearing old Leonidas Glover sing his own fine ballad of 'Hosier's Ghost,' which was very affecting. He is past eighty.

Mr. Walpole coming in just afterwards, I told him how highly I had been pleased. He begged me to intreat a repetition of it. I suppose you recollect that it was the satire, conveyed in this little ballad, upon the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole's ministry, which is thought to have been a remote cause of his resignation. It was a very curious circumstance to see his son listening to the recital of it with so much complacency. Such is the effect of the lapse of time.

I have rarely heard a more curious instance of the absence of mind produced by poetic enthusiasm, than that which occurred when the author of Leonidas made one of a party of literati assembled at the house of Mr. Gilbert West, at Wickham. Lord Lyttleton, on opening his window one morning, perceived Glover pacing to and fro with a whip in his hand, by the side of a fine bed of tulips just ready to blow, and which were the peculiar care of the lady of the mansion, who worshipped Flora with as much ardour as Glover did the muses. His mind was at the instant teeming with the birth of some little ballad, when Lord Lyttleton, to his astonishment and dismay, perceived him applying his whip with great vehemence to the stalks of the unfortunate tulips; all of which, before there was time to awaken him from his reverie, he had completely levelled with the ground; and when the devastation he had committed was afterwards

pointed out to him, he was so perfectly unconscious of the proceeding, that he could with difficulty be made to believe it.

I spent a couple of evenings, the last week I was in town, with only Mr. Walpole and Miss Hamilton. The former read some productions of his own to us. He is gone down to Strawberry-Hill, where is his printing press, to collect all his works; which, when bound, are to be sent after me to Bristol, to help towards making a library at 'Cowslip Green.' He likes the name, and says it is a relation, a cousin at least, to 'Strawberry-Hill.' He likes the plan and drawing mightily; and so does Mr. Smelt, with whom I spent a pleasant evening, a day or two before I set out. The cottage has travelled about to them all in turn, so that they all know every creek and corner of the little mansion.

MEMOIRS.

PART III.

FROM A. D. 1785 TO A. D. 1802.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

THE letter just produced, was the last we find written from Hannah More to her sister, during her visit to Mrs. Garrick, in the spring of 1785. And at this period we observe the genuine characteristics of her mind more fully and forcibly in operation.

We have long been regarding her in the crowded scenes of gaiety and greatness, moving within a fairy circle, where all that could captivate the sensibility and betray the understanding of a trusting heart and a capacious head, were leagued against her.

In the midst of these disturbing influences, an interior guide suggested the duty of religious recollection and self-inquiry; and it was well known to her intimate friends how cordially she welcomed the serious hour and the solitary pause, which let in upon her mind the solemn and substantial

purposes for which she was intended and qualified, and brought before her a brighter world and purer subjects of thought and aspiration.

A candid examiner of her letters will discern in them, as their dates come nearer to the present time, a growing conviction of the unsatisfactoriness of all enjoyments which are not in accordance with scripture, and in unison with prayer. And while many of her friends and companions remained contented where she found them, till their places knew them no more, Hannah More was advancing in religious attainments, and listening to the vocation that summoned her to solid glory. Prayer, the frequent perusal of holy scripture, and the strict observance of the Sabbath, kept her mind in a healthful state, and her feet in "the walk of wisdom."

She began, about this time, to contract the circle of her acquaintance, with a view to carry into execution the resolution she had long cherished, of passing a portion of her time in the retirement of the country. Having become the possessor of a little secluded spot which had acquired the name of 'Cowslip Green,' near Bristol, the occupation of dressing and cultivating her garden brought back the peaceful associations of her early days.

It will not appear extraordinary to those who have observed how domineering an influence opportunity, habit, and solicitation will maintain for a time, over the real and permanent bias of reason and principle, that the seated preferences of Miss More's better judgment should in the sanguine

season of youth, have yielded to the world and its flatteries. But that early feeling which prompted her infant wish for 'a habitation too low for a clock,' was still fresh in her bosom.

After the surprise of her sudden elevation and distinction was over, her first love appeared to return. The country, with its 'green pastures, and its still waters,' began to call her back to the element in which such exercises and inquiries might be pursued, as were most profitable and least perishable.

Still, however, her sensibility to kindness would not allow her to withhold herself from her friends in London; and those annual visits to Mrs. Garrick brought her frequently, though less frequently, into contact with the world and its crowded resorts. Her mornings, however, were generally her own during her stay in London, and those mornings were not vacant or unconsecrated. Neither did the opportunities which the parties of the evening afforded her, of advocating truth and enforcing duty, pass unimproved.

In polished societies she never forgot her allegiance to truth; and her tongue was bold, where pomp and pleasure made it most unwelcome, to proclaim those principles which her pen afterwards so successfully vindicated, even at the hazard of being discarded and disclaimed.

Many of the reflections and animadversions of a sternly virtuous complexion, which fell with great weight upon passing events and existing characters, have been withdrawn from the letters

which have been already presented to the public, from an apprehension of imparting pain where pain could no longer conduce to amendment; of wounding family feelings; or of reviving sorrowful recollections; and it is to be remembered, that in her letters to her sisters she was pouring out her heart, on some subjects, under the seal of the strictest confidence. Not to have animadverted with severity upon the prescriptive immoralities of the fashionable scenes which had suddenly opened upon her, would have suggested a doubt of her discernment, or a suspicion of her integrity. Youth, novelty, flattery, kindness, and splendour, were conspiring to impede her progress in wisdom; yet her thoughts revolted against the system in which she was implicated, and often broke out in the language of becoming indignation against the manners of those who were raising altars to her genius.

From Hannah More to her sister.

Adelphi, February, 1786.

We are come to town, but Mrs. Garrick talks much of the charms of the country, where I think she has acted her winter pastoral rather too long; for the cold is so intense, that the best pleasure I have found for a long time, is to sit over a great fire and read Cowper's Poems. I am enchanted with this poet; his images are so natural and so much his own! Such an original and philosophic thinker! such genuine Christianity! and such a divine simplicity! but rather rambling, and the order not very

lucid. He seems to put down every thought as it arises, and never to retrench or alter anything. I have hardly the courage to stir, and have refused several invitations out of pity to man and beast; I dined, however, the other day with Mrs. Montagu.

A previous engagement will prevent my dining at Lord Mount Edgecombe's to-morrow, which, as there will be a great many of my friends there, I should have liked very well, but I have laid it down as an act of moral turpitude to break any engagement, because something happens to present itself which you like rather better. I have just been debating, till I am out of breath, with a very great and wise lady on this subject. She laughed and said, it was a ridiculous scruple, but that once she had been as good as I. I told her I wished I had known her in those days.

From the same to the same.

London, Feb. 17, 1786.

I really have not found a moment's time to write since I came here, one is so hurried and bustled about; and has so many nothings to do which yet must be done, and so many foolish notes to write, which yet must be written. I had, however, yesterday a comfortable solitary Sunday. I am here alone. I have not yet seen a great many of my friends. 'Tis true I have dined out nearly every day with some kind people, who have fetched me and brought me home, but I have not gone to evening parties. I want a little time to break myself in,

so as to take to it kindly. I made poor Vesey go with me, on Saturday, to see Mr. Walpole, who has had a long illness. Notwithstanding his sufferings, I never found him so pleasant, so witty, and so entertaining. He said a thousand diverting things about Florio,[1] but accused me of having imposed on the world by a dedication full of falsehood, meaning the compliment to himself. I never knew a man suffer pain with such entire patience. This submission is certainly a most valuable part of religion, and yet, alas! he is not religious. I must, however, do him the justice to say, that except the delight he has in teazing me for what he calls overstrictness, I have never heard a sentence from him which savoured of infidelity.

I was at a small party the other night, of which Mr. Burke was one. He appeared to be very low in health and spirits. He talked to me with a kindness which revived my old affection for him. We had several other opposition wits that evening; among others, Lord North, who was delightfully entertaining, and told some excellent stories, at which he has a very good talent; possessing in perfection the art of grave humour. Mrs. Fielding and I, like pretty little Misses, diverted ourselves with teaching Sir Joshua and Lord Palmerston the play of twenty questions, and thoroughly did we puzzle them by picking out little obscure insignificant things which we collected from ancient history. Lord North overhearing us, desired to be

[1] This poetical tale had been lately published with the Bas Bleu.

initiated into this mysterious game, and it was proposed that I should question him: I did so, but his twenty questions were exhausted before he came near the truth. As he at length gave up the point, I told him my thought was the earthen lamp of Epictetus. I am quite provoked at my own stupidity, said his lordship, for I quoted that very lamp last night in the House of Commons.

I was the other day at Lady Mount Edgecombe's who repeated her invitation for the Mount Edgecombe visit next summer with the most earnest politeness. I gave her to understand that I was afraid it must be left for another year; the truth is, I intend to get off all summer invitations, that I may have the more time for Cowslip Green, which place, I hope, will favour my escape from the world gradually.

I dined the other day with Mrs. Walsingham, and went in the evening to Lady Middleton's to meet Lord and Lady Dartmouth. He is the nobleman, who, you know, Cowper says—'wears a coronet and prays.' The Attorney-General and Lady Louisa Macdonald wait to convey me to Sir Robert Herries', where we dine together. And now I hope to receive due praise for my implicit obedience in gratifying your insatiable curiosity with an account of almost every dinner I have eaten, and every person to whom I have spoken.

To the same.

London, March 1786.

When I sent word last night to poor Mrs. Vesey that I was coming to her, she was so afraid she should not make it agreeable, that she immediately sent for Mr. Burke to meet me. He was engaged, but his son came, with Mr. Windham, an accomplished man, but too warm a politician. We took to each other mightily, and renewed our old acquaintance made in the gay days of Hampton; for we used then to meet there with the Sheridan party. Richard Burke is an amiable young man, but not an adequate substitute for such a father.

Mr. Walpole tells me that there is a very curious work now in the press; 'Private Letters written in the reign of Henry IV.' These, as they are undoubtedly genuine, are in themselves a great curiosity, as they are above a hundred years older than any letters we have in the English language. Their literary merit, I suppose, is not great: they are family letters about domestic concerns, with the news of the then day, and the politics of the times during the Lancastrian wars. They are to be printed in the old spelling on one page, and modernized on the other. I fancy we shall not meet with any quotations from Rowley. To the lovers of antiquities and anecdotes they will be very amusing: as for me, I have no great appetite for anything merely as being curious, unless it has other merits.

These letters have been preserved in the family of the Pastons of Norfolk.

We are going for a few days to Hampton. I shall delight in a little quiet, and fresh air, two commodities not to be had in any of the London markets.

To the same.

London, April, 1786.

I invite myself to dine with poor Mrs. Vesey (whose spirits are still terribly depressed) whenever I have a vacant day. She is only cheerful when she has one or two friends about her, and there are a little set who generally go to her in turn every day. Yesterday Mrs. Carter and I met there, and I had made an assignation with Mr. Walpole in the evening; we had likewise Mr. Burke. The vivacity of this wonderfully great man is much diminished; business and politics have impaired his agreeableness; but neither years nor sufferings can abate the entertaining powers of the pleasant Horace, which rather improve than decay; though he himself says he is only fit to be a milk-woman; as the chalk-stones at his fingers' ends qualify him for nothing but *scoring;* but he declares he will not be a *Bristol milk-woman.* I was obliged to recount to him all that odious tale.

I was the other day at a most agreeable party at Lady Galway's. Mrs. Fielding, Mrs. Carter, Lord North, Lord Macartney and myself, were in one little set; and they were very entertaining. Lord

Macartney is one of the most agreeable men I know, of polished mind and fine taste; besides the rare merit which he possesses, of having brought clean hands and a pure fame from India. To meet these gentlemen in assemblies, and in crowds, where the most stupid and illiterate make just as good a figure, is not seeing them at all; but it is pleasant to come at them in these select societies, which we are to have often of a Saturday, it being the only day the Houses do not sit.

Mrs. Piozzi's book is much in fashion. It is indeed entertaining; but there are two or three passages exceedingly unkind to Garrick, which filled me with indignation. If Johnson had been envious enough to utter them, she might have been prudent enough to suppress them. Johnson with all his genius had no taste for Garrick's acting; and with all his virtues, was envious of his riches: this led him very unjustly to say severe things, which Garrick not unfrequently retorted; but why must these things be recorded? The speaker, perhaps, had forgotten them, or was sorry for them, or did not mean them; but this new-fashioned biography seems to value itself upon perpetuating every thing that is injurious and detracting.

I perfectly recollect the candid answer Garrick once made to my inquiry why Johnson was so often harsh and unkind in his speeches, both to and of him; Why, *Nine,* he replied, it is very natural; is it not to be expected he should be angry, that I who have so much less merit than he, should have had so much greater success?

The book, however, *in general*, places Johnson's character very high. I expressed myself with some warmth to Lælius against these passages, saying, however, that I was glad she had done justice to my *living* friends at least. *His* learning in particular is very highly commended.

To the same.

London, April, 1786.

The Bozzi, &c. subjects are not yet exhausted, though every body seems heartily sick of them. Everybody, however, conspires not to let them drop. That, and the 'Cagliostro,' and the 'Cardinal's Necklace,' spoil all conversation, and destroyed a very good evening at Mr. Pepys's last night. The party was snug, and of my own bespeaking, consisting only of Mr. Walpole, Mrs. Montagu, the Burneys, and Cambridge.

I have had a very long and entertaining letter from Girard.[1] He gives such an account of the pedantry and precieuseté of the ladies of Paris as is quite ridiculous. There is a new Lyceum, under the inspection of Marmontel and the other sçavans: there he says, the *femmes de qualité, the petites maitres, and the bourgeoiserie meme en robe de chambre*, run to study philosophy, and neglect their families to be present at lectures of anatomy. I hope we shall never have any of these sort of institutions here, which would be only multiplying

[1] One of the French academicians, with whom she corresponded some years.

public places, and add to dissipation instead of increasing knowledge.

It was my lot the other day at dinner to sit between two travellers, famous for making geography their whole subject: the one is as fond of talking of the east as the other is of the north; the former poured the Ganges into one of my ears, and the latter the Danube into the other, and the confluence of these two mighty rivers deluged all my ideas, till I did not know what they were talking about, especially as I like *things*, much better than *words*.

I am this day in the full enjoyment of a most complete holiday—Mrs. Garrick is gone to Hampton. I have refused all invitations, and have ordered that nobody should be let in, that I may have the luxury of one quiet uninterrupted day. I awoke with great delight in the very anticipation of it.

The Bishop of Chester brought me home from Soame Jenyns's the other night. We had there almost all I know that is wise, learned and witty; but there were too many, and we all complained of a superfluity of good things. Cambridge said we should have made eight of the best parties in London. He gave us a specimen of Johnson's manner. 'Poetry, Madam, is like brown bread; those who make it at home, never approve of what they meet with elsewhere.'

I was asked lately to a great assembly, where I should have met all the *corps diplomatique*, but it was not worth while to lose an evening and get the

headache, only to see a few ambassadors and envoys make low bows, drink orangeade, and play at whist. I have kept my resolution to avoid these great crowds, except when I have been snared into an assembly under the alluring name of a little private party, into which trap I have fallen several times.

I spent quite a rational sober country day on Thursday, with the wise and virtuous Langton and Lady Rothes; so peaceful, I could not persuade myself I was in London; dined at three; sat and worked while he read to us, or talked of books, till late at night. I really begin to hope we are reforming; for on Saturday I got another such sober day at Mrs. Montagu's, with only the Smelts; and we all agreed we had not been more comfortable for a long time; and yet people have rarely the sense or courage to do these things, but still must meet in flocks and herds.

To the same.

London, May, 1786.

We have had a great but pleasant dinner at the Bishop of Salisbury's, which was the more valuable, as we had so much difficulty to achieve it; and a good old *bas bleu* dinner at Mrs. Vesey's, such as she used to give in her happier days, and which put her in spirits, as it brought back those days to her mind. I sat next my Lord Macartney, who never fails to furnish abundance of lively matter for interesting conversation. Lady Mount Edgecombe made another very kind attack upon my constancy, to prevail

upon me to come to her in the summer, but I remained impenetrable to her eloquence, great and obliging as it was. I could have parodied Ulysses' speech in Telemaque, 'Pour moi, je préfére ma pauvre petite isle, ses choux et ses rochers, à toute votre magnificence.'

I have naturally but a small appetite for grandeur, which is always satisfied even to indigestion, before I leave this town; and I require a long abstinence to get any relish for it again; yet I repeat, these are very agreeable people, but there is dress, there is restraint, there is want of leisure, to which I find it difficult to conform for any length of time,—and life is short.

I sometimes get an interesting morning visitor; of two or three I have entertained some hope that they were beginning to think seriously. Lady B. and I had a long discourse yesterday; she seems anxious for religious information. I told her much plain truth, and she bore it so well, that I ventured to give her Doddridge. If she should not stumble at the threshold, from the strong manner in which the book opens, I trust she will read it with good effect. Miss —— has been also with me several times—beautiful and accomplished; surrounded with flatterers, and sunk in dissipation. I asked her why she continued to live so much below, not only her principles, but her understanding—what pleasure she derived from crowds of persons so inferior to herself—did it make her happy? Happy! she said, no; she was miserable; she despised the society she lived in, and had no enjoyment of the

pleasures in which her life was consumed; but what could she do? She could not be singular—she must do as her acquaintance did. I pushed it so home on her conscience, that she wept bitterly, and embraced me. I conjured her to read her Bible, with which she is utterly unacquainted. These fine creatures are, I hope, sincere, when they promise to be better; but the very next temptation that comes across them puts all their good intentions to flight, and they go on, as if they had never formed them; nay, all the worse for having formed and not realized them. They shall have my prayers, which are the most effectual part of our endeavours.

From the same to the same.

London, May 10, 1786.

I hope our engagements are now pretty well drawing to a close. I was engaged the four last days to Lady Bathurst, Lady Amherst, Lady Cremorne, and Lady Mount Edgecombe. I went through three of them manfully, coughing and croaking with great success.

Sir Joshua is doing a picture for the Empress of Russia, but I do not think he has chosen his subject happily, and so I ventured to tell his friend Burke, the other night, though he warmly defended him. The Empress left the subject to him, and desired to have a capital work of his in her collection. The story he has taken is Hercules strangling the young serpents. I think he might have chosen better than that stale piece of mythology. Mr.

Walpole suggested to Sir Joshua an idea for a picture which he thought would include something honourable to both nations; the scene Deptford, and the time when the Czar Peter was receiving a ship-carpenter's dress in exchange for his own, to work in the dock. This would be a great idea, and much more worthy of the pencil of the artist than nonsensical Hercules.

I have always had a great curiosity to converse with a disciple of Mahomet, and it was gratified the other day by my being invited to meet the Turkish ambassador. His suite, I think, consisted of six Musselmans. They took their coffee sitting cross-legged on the floor. I confined my attention entirely to his excellency, who was placed next to me on the sofa, and did not sit cross-legged. His dragoman is a very sensible agreeable person, and speaks all languages. The ambassador, a good solemn-looking Turk, was very communicative. His son stood the whole evening behind the sofa on which his father sat. I obtained considerable information about their usages and manners. At my desire, they spoke together a little Arabic, which is a very pretty-sounding language. They had, I believe, some hopes of bringing me over to the faith of the prophet, for they recommended me to read Sale's edition of the Alcoran. In return, I think I should have advised them to read White's Sermons. I asked how they contrived to exercise their religion in this country without a mosque. They told me that every great man in their country was both priest and lawyer, and allowed to exercise all the

functions of both; that the ambassador did the duties of religion in his own house: and the Turk added, 'I do not know how those (pointing to some statesmen who sat a distance) lords do, but I am not ashamed to own that I retire five times a day to offer prayer and oblation.' This he partly explained to me in broken Italian, and the rest was interpreted to me by the secretary.

I believe I have not mentioned Lord Monboddo this winter. I had a memorable quarrel with him one night lately; it was about Shakspeare and John Home. He said Douglas was a better play than Shakspeare could have written. He was angry and I was pert. I called in Mrs. Montagu to my aid, and very saucy things we did say, which provoked him highly. Lord Mulgrave sat spiriting me up, but kept out of the scrape himself; and Lord Stormont seemed to enjoy the debate, but was shabby enough not to help me out. With his fine dry humour, he would have had the advantage of us all. I was really very much diverted, though I was angry too; for the prejudiced Scotch critic, by rating Douglas so much above its real merit, made me appear unjust, by seeming to undervalue it; but when he said that Shakspeare had no conception of drawing a king or a hero—that there was not so interesting a discovery in the whole of his works, as that of Lady Randolph and her son, and that the passions were always vulgarly delineated; it was impossible to be temperate, and difficult to be just. I suppose, when, on a former occasion, he declared that no modern could turn a period

finely, he meant to make an exception in favour of Scotch authors.

We have had a numerous party to dinner; among others Mr. and Mrs. Swinburne the travellers, with whom I am lately become much acquainted; they are people who have been a good deal distinguished in different courts. The lady is the more agreeable of the two, though she has not, like her husband, written three quarto volumes about Spain and Calabria. They live chiefly abroad, and are great bigots to Popery. She is the great friend of the Queen of Naples, and not less a favourite of the Queen of France—a singular pair of friendships for an Englishwoman of no rank.

Teston, June 4, 1786.

We have been a week at this sweet place,[1] with these sweet people. Mrs. E. Bouverie lives with the Middletons in town, and they with her here. Her character has something sublime in it; but you must know her well to admire her as I do, for she is reserved to strangers. With a cultivated mind, and a most thinking head, she only produces herself in our *tête-à-têtes:* Her charities are boundless. Lady Middleton is very excellent, and very different; she is made up of feeling and compassion. Her kindness, which you would think must needs be exhausted on the negroes, extends to the sufferings of every animal. She never 'worked the woe of any living thing.' Sir Charles is obliged to leave

[1] Mrs. Bouverie's.

us to attend to the birthday. You would be delighted too with his character. He has the stern and simple virtues of the old school. Mrs. Garrick carries me as far as Sandleford Priory on Monday the 12th. I remain four days with Mrs. Montagu, and hope to sleep in Bristol on the 17th. Lady Spencer came herself to prevail upon us to go to her for a little time, at St. Alban's, but I could not resolve upon prolonging my stay from home. This agreeable place, fine air, and cultivated and pious society have quite set me up again. I was invited to a prodigiously fine concert, a few days ago, to hear "*all the Rubinellis and Maras*:" but having for some time declined all great parties, I did not go: besides, I was going where I could hear the nightingales for nothing. I dined, one of the last days before I left town, at the Pepys's; and I think it was one of the wittiest and most brilliant dinners I was ever present at. Since the old times I think I have not heard so much pleasant discussion. I went to a select party to meet Mr. Smelt and Mr. and Mrs. Hastings. Mr. H. is a man of remarkable simplicity of manners, dress, and deportment: full of admirable good sense: nothing of the nabob about him. The Bishop of Chester declares he will come some time or other to *Cowslip Green*.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Cowslip Green, 1786.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your most agreeable letter was the first in priority of time, as well as value, that came to enliven my retreat, of which I have just taken possession. I spent a very pleasant week with Mrs. Montagu, at Sandleford, *en chemin faisant*. Her house is not so much advanced as I wished and expected: but her grounds are in great order, and wonderfully embellished. The place can never appear to so great advantage, as to those who knew it in its unimproved state. I believe it preserves one of the last strokes of Browne's magic hand.

You are so good to me, my dear madam, that I know you will be glad to hear that I am comfortably established in my little cottage. It is a pleasant wild place, and I am growing a prodigious gardener, and make up by my industry for my want of science. I work in it two or three hours every day; and by the time the hour of visiting arrives, —for even I have my visitors in this little corner, I am vastly glad of a pretence for sitting down. I am rather proud of my pinks and roses: the latter would not have been ashamed to hold up their heads before the Queen of Rosedale;[1] but a long succession of uninterrupted dry weather has a little shrivelled up these beauties, and made them wither

[1] Rosedale was now Mrs. Boscawen's country seat.

before the short term of their natural life was near an end. Yours, I hope, have had a better fortune and a longer date.

As to books, *je n'en sais rien;* I lead a kind of lawless life; and were it not, as Dogberry says, that reading and writing come by nature, I believe my present vagrant life would make me forego all the habits and customs of civilization. I wish, however I could read a German translation of a little book you, my dear Madam, are very good to,—the 'Sacred Dramas,' which is just sent me by a person I never heard of, from abroad, with many pretty cuts of the principal scenes, neatly engraved.

I am going to Bristol for a little time; not having yet appeared to any of my friends in this hemisphere. I intend to see the Bishop of Gloucester, and Mrs. Halifax, who are, I am sorry to say, come to the hot wells for her health. Her's is a very important life. She is the careful mother of a numerous little race, and has much impaired her health by maternal anxiety. I hope you get good accounts of Mrs. Delany, and that the late atrocious attempt on the dear King, which I believe made all English blood run cold, did not terrify her to the injury of her health.

My dear Madam,

Your ever obliged and affectionate.

H. More.

CHAPTER II.

Of the interval which Hannah More now passed at Cowslip Green, we find no account supplied by her correspondence. It is probable she lived in great retirement, pursuing her gardening occupations, to which she was so much addicted by her tastes and affections. She visited Mrs. Garrick again in the December of this year (1786).

From H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1786.

I found Mrs. Garrick well. Next morning we sallied out, and called upon a few particular friends. Yesterday I dined at Mrs. Boscawen's; we had a comfortable serious conversation, and in the evening she carried me to Mrs. Vesey's in my travelling dress. I did not find her so much broken as I expected, since last year, though I grieve to say her memory is visibly impaired. I was sorry not to find Mr. Walpole. Instead of the pleasant Horace, I found only two or three formal women of quality;

so I left Mrs. Boscawen to *anecdote* with them, and stole home in her coach. This dear friend expressed such a cordial delight to see me, that it did my heart good.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1786.

Do I not write dull letters?' You shall see, my dear friend. I received, yesterday, one that was not dull, and which contained many kind wishes, most affectionately expressed: these I return with the greatest sincerity. The post being late, I did not get this kind epistle till I was in my coach for the evening rendezvous at Mr. Cole's, where we had Mrs. Montagu and Co., Jenynses, Bishop of Exeter, Judge Ashurst, Bishop Watson, Lady Abdy, Lady Charlotte Tufton, the Veseys, with many others, and 'our circle every figure took.' The whist was banished into a petit cabinet apart, and there was a very snug corner in which I treated myself with your very kind epistle. I said to myself, what an agreeable addition would the writer be to this party, and would find, *par ci et par la*, food for her *attention*.

I went to Opie's this morning, resolved I would no longer delay obtaining that for which others sue in vain. I have taken down his 'Days and Hours of Leisure,' humbly to submit them to your choice. Wednesday, the 25th, or Thursday, the 26th, at any hour before four, that you will be pleased to approve, I should rather

say consent to, perhaps *submit* would be still more just,—I will call on you, and attend you, and read to you there to cheat the weary hour; and perhaps you will return with me to dinner. What say you, my dear Madam? I promise you never to lend my picture to be engraved unless you order me. It is certainly worthy of Sir Joshua Reynolds's superior skill: but I can command Opie, and make him alter, or even refaire, if we do not like it. If you will have half as much patience as I have affection, then it will be sufficient to answer any demand that can be made upon it by

Your most attached friend,

F. B.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Hampton, 1786.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Some little contre tems has detained us here a fortnight beyond our bargain; we propose, however, certainly to be in town by the beginning of next week. I have been amusing myself, during a part of our solitude, with reading some of Madame de Sevigné's letters, and you cannot imagine, my dear Madam, what a fund of entertainment I find as I go along in drawing a parallel between them and those of a certain lady, whom it is one of my greatest honours to be permitted to call my friend. The same admirable turn of expression, the same ease which, when imitated, is so stiff, and, when natural, is so full of grace. The same philanthropy,

the same warm feelings, and, above all, the same excess of maternal tenderness—the same art of dignifying subjects, in themselves of little moment, but which become amiable and interesting by some *true*, though seemingly *random* and *careless* stroke, that shews the hand of a master, but of a master sketching for his amusement, and not finishing for the public. This rage for *finishing* may produce good essays and fine orations, but it makes frigid letters. For this reason, I think Voiture's letters are in bad taste; he always intends to be brilliant, and, therefore, is almost always affected—every passage seems written in its *very best* manner. Now to me the epistolary style is what it ought to be, when the writer, by a happy and becoming negligence, has the art of making you believe that he could write a great deal better if he would, but that he has too much judgment to use great exertions on small occasions—he will not draw Ulysses's bow to shoot at a pigeon. It is not, however, that I think letter-writing trifling because it is familiar, any more than I think an epigram easy because it is short. My two models, whom I *parellelized* (I believe there is no such word though,) at the beginning of this scrawl, also resemble each other in one particular as much as they differ from the generality; which is their perspicuity; their sense is never perplexed; their periods are not so long as to be involved, nor so short as to be affected; and there is in their manner a kind of luminous cast, which, like the sunshine of Claude, embellishes the most trifling objects. When a poet happens to be possessed of

this transparency of expression, this vivid brightness, it gives a wonderful charm to his numbers.

But to go from poetry to painting.—And so, my dear Madam, your partiality to your unworthy friend makes you determined to send her down to posterity by the only conveyance in which she can ever expect to reach it. I feel all the kindness of your intention, and I hope you will not think me ungrateful when I say that I have such a repugnance to having my picture taken, that I do not know any motive on earth which could induce me to it but your wishes, which to me, are such indisputable commands, that at any time on Wednesday you will please to appoint, I shall have the honour to attend you to Mr. Opie; and as I am sure the dinner with you will be the pleasantest part of the business to me, I shall wait for your commands as to both. En attendant, believe me, dear Madam,

Ever yours,

H. M.

Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Cowslip Green, 1786.

The parson of my parish, and his new married wife, (a musical Miss Wathen, who says she knows you) having offered to carry my letters to town, I am tempted to call myself to your remembrance, by scrawling a few lines to you from my little rural habitation. . .

The day after that pleasant one we spent with you at Mr. Batt's, Mrs. Garrick carried me to

Sandleford Priory, where I staid a week. I lived melódious days with Mrs. Montagu, the nightingales, and Spenser. We enjoyed ourselves prodigiously, and were as enthusiastic and as foolish as we pleased.

Sandleford is amazingly improved; you would recant your former errors, which brought you into disgrace, could you see with what happiness Browne has beckoned the distant hills to come into prospect. His hand, with an art nobler than that of Midas, turns gold itself into beauty; and I had always a particular love for the talents of a man who could improve the taste of a country without impairing its virtue.

Will it be the smallest gratification to you to know that you were often wished for? Nor would you have disliked joining in the unrestrained freedom, and safe indiscretion (which I hold to be one of the first comforts of real friendly communication) with which we talked *à tort et à travers*, where we could fear no censure, and courted no praise, for we had no auditors.

I have now been quietly set down a month in my little cottage; and the evil days are not yet come upon me, wherein you barbarously prophesied that I should feel a joy to see even the apothecary ride up to the door; though it is certain I never *do* see him without thinking of you, by the aforesaid association. I did not express myself with much accuracy when I talked of living *quietly*; for in truth my neighbours are so kind, and so many people have brought themselves within that description,

whom I had considered as without the limits, that I am very far from enjoying that perfect retreat which I had figured to myself; and which perhaps, though so vastly pretty in speculation, and very tempting in poetry, I should find burthensome enough if I were to reduce it to sober experiment.

I work in my garden all the morning, and ride in the evening through delicious lanes and hills, as pleasant as that of Mount Ephraim, on which I met Mr. Rust. I read seldom, and write never, except now and then a letter to entitle myself to the comfort of hearing from the few I esteem and care for. My most serious study has been a little book of Mrs. Trimmer's, that wise and pleasant friend of little children;—it is, preposterously enough, called *Fabulous Histories;* which misled me into a notion that it was mythological; but I found it a most delectable History of a Robin Red-breast's nest, which I recommend to the younger part of your nursery. My friend William, I fancy, will be much above it, but it is delightful for little Mouse and me, and such readers; being quite as entertaining, and almost as true, as histories of graver names and more illustrious people.

I was in the very joy of my heart, on seeing the other day in the papers, that our charming Miss Burney has got an establishment so near the queen. How I love the queen for having so wisely chosen!

I am sure Mrs. Pepys and you must have felt a great deal for poor Mr. Burrows: I know few private losses which will be more severely felt. I

have met with few characters which took in a greater compass. His peculiar vein of wit, his truly original turn of thinking, his singular talent in education, and his uncommon felicity as an earnest and awakening preacher, all concurred to set his character in a very extraordinary point of view. I shall be vastly glad if you can give me any particulars of his death. I know nothing so interesting as the closing scenes of a champion of righteousness: there is one single fact that one may oppose to all the wit and argument of infidelity,—that no man ever repented of Christianity on his death-bed. I grieve for the heavy blow this death will give to the feelings of our friend Mrs. Chapone: I doubt not but she is affectionately sharing the sorrows of the afflicted family.

Mrs. Boscawen just writes me that you have it in contemplation to go to the Isle of Wight. I have a notion it is a most delicious spot; but as I was never on it, I shall expect an animated picture of it from your pen. . . . .

Pray remember me very kindly to Mrs. Pepys.

I am, dear Sir,

Your much obliged,

HANNAH MORE.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Hampton, Dec. 26, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

Rumour, who, for want of nobler prey, now and then condescends to souse on such insignificant

gibier as myself, may have told you that I passed through London in my way hither. As I stayed in town only two days, I appeared only to two or three of our friends. I did not knock at your door, out of mere kindness to Mrs. Pepys, as I knew there was little chance of finding her, and great chance of her having the trouble of calling on us again, when I knew we should be flown. But I wished very much, and do still wish to know, seriously, how you do, and if the Bath waters did their duty by you? I hear in *general* that you are *better*, but I wish to hear in *particular* that you are *well*.

I wish you had been here just now to have laughed with me, at a very grave passage I met with in a book I have just laid down. It is an Elogè on the humility of the Virgin Mary, delivered at the Academie Française, by one of the Quarante. Mons. Tourreuil, after having apostrophized her in a way to make a sober Protestant smile, and described the transcendent exaltation she now enjoys in heaven, as a reward of her humility, goes on to *inform* her, that her humility is still farther rewarded, by her having the honour of being made the subject for the prize of eloquence by the most enlightened Academy in the world. Could any but a *Frenchman* have written thus? Nay, I question if any but a French *Academician* could have written it. It would be impossible to find the most illiterate English curate,—who would seriously affirm that he thought it an additional exaltation of a saint in bliss, that the University of

Oxford had named him as a subject for a prize poem.

Mrs. Garrick is well, and joins me in all manner of Christmas congratulations, and good wishes to Mrs. Pepys and yourself.

We depart instantly for Thames Ditton, where we are to spend a fortnight. We have been forced to cut off a piece from the beginning of this visit, from my having been confined with a great cold.

Do people write books now? I know nothing of the world or its ways. Yes; I *have* read Dr. Price's new Sermons; but that is a field too copious to enter upon at the end of a sheet of paper, when I have hardly left room for the name of your much obliged

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Thames Ditton,[1] 1786.

I hope you received the books safe, my dear Madam. Mrs. Garrick presents her best respects, with many thanks for the *tableau*, which she read *d'un bout à l'autre*. As to the other, I confess I did not read it, it was so dull,—the only fault I never expected to find in Rousseau. 'Tous les genres sont bons hors le genre ennuyeux,' says his sprightly enemy, and so think I. I am delighted that Florio has the good fortune to amuse you: I am trying to get him upon his feet (I do not mean

[1] The seat of the Hon. Mrs. Walsingham, daughter of Lady Coningsby.

that I ever expect him to *run*) before I come to London. I have attempted some alterations, which I hope have given a more dramatic form to the poem, and made it somewhat more pointed; but still my moments *à la derobée* are here so few, that I cannot give it the chiselling it wants. I have altered the title, as the other, I thought, raised false expectations, and was by no means the hinge on which the tale turns.

Mr. Pepys will have told you what violent opposition the Thames Ditton party make, to the bringing the said Monsieur Florio into the world *clandestinely*. Mrs. Walsingham joins Mrs. Garrick and Mr. Pepys, in insisting that he be brought into the world as the lawful issue of his mother. They also earnestly recommend my adding to this publication the 'Bas Bleu,' the copies of which are so multiplied, that a mutilated one will probably steal into the world. Now, my dear Madam, I assured them I should not stir a step in this business till I had your directions. I have argued the matter with them, but they seem decided. It breaks in on my little project of secrecy, but I am most afraid that you will think I am only writing to you for your advice to me to do that, which I had resolved to do without it. But I hope you know me better, and that I am not guilty of this affectation. I shall patiently wait for your opinion; you are my Court of Chancery, and your judgment is always decisive, my dearest Madam; with

Your ever obliged and faithful,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to her sister.

London, March, 1787.

The first day I went out I had an invitation to Lady Amherst, and another to *the Vesey*, to meet Mr. Smelt and Miss Burney. I deserted the peeress, and was rewarded for my democracy with a very pleasant and a *very little* party.

I have an Anti-gallican anecdote for you. Just before Sir Joseph Yorke came home from Holland, he was at dinner one day at the Prince of Orange's, where was the Duc de Chartres: this latter behaved with his usual unpoliteness, and took it into his head to ridicule the English ambassador. Finding that Sir Joseph did not laugh at any of his buffooneries, 'Quoi, Monsieur,' said he, 'est ce que vous ne riez jamais?' 'Rarement, Monseigneur,' replied Sir Joseph with great coolness. Just at that time, the combined French and Spanish fleets were in the British channel—a new subject for the ill-breeding of the French prince. 'Mais, Monsieur,' says he again, turning to Sir Joseph, 'si notre flotte attacqueroit l'Angleterre?' 'Alors, Monseigneur, je rirois,' said Sir Joseph.

I have the pleasure to find Mr. Walpole remarkably well. Yesterday he sent me a very agreeable letter, with some very thick volumes of curious French memoirs, desiring me, if I liked them, to send for the other *twenty-three volumes*—a pretty light undertaking, in this mad town, and this short life. I have just been requested to pro-

mote a subscription for poor Maty's widow, who is left in great distress; but what little I do I had rather do from my own purse, than by applications. I must not remember that he disliked me, and did me whatever little ill turn he could in his Review.

I have three or four invitations for every day; but I can only manage one dinner in one day. I passed an evening very pleasantly at the Bishop of Chester's, with an episcopal party, among others the new Bishop of Lincoln; and since that I have visited Mrs. Pretyman, at their own house. Yesterday I dined with dear Mrs. Boscawen, and she carried me to drink tea at Mrs. Delany's, where was Lady Bute, and the old noble party, all except its once greatest ornament, the ever-to-be-regretted Duchess of Portland. We then went to Lady Charlotte Finch's, at St. James's, where we found a very agreeable and accomplished society of all the wise ladies of the age. I was at the Bishop of Salisbury's the other day, and am invited to Mrs. Montagu's to-night, and Mrs. Walsingham's to-morrow, but have declined both.

From the same to the same.

London, March 31, 1787.

Well, I have got the 'Paston Letters.' As letters, they have very little merit. The style of composition at that time was barbarous enough; not a bit of the elegance of Rowley, the contemporary (if he ever existed) with the writers of these letters. To be sure they do throw a light on some

obscure passages of history; and as they contain the news of the day at a time when there were no newspapers, they often serve to correct history. It is curious enough to see the great Earl of Warwick, the setter-up and puller-down of kings, writing to entreat a friend to lend him ten pounds. Margaret of Anjou appears better than the histories have made her.

I quite quarrel with Mrs. Ord, she does so extol Cowslip Green, that I am forced to lower it too much, to prevent all those who shall see it, after her commendations, from being disappointed. She gave Mr. Walpole so animated a description of it, that I believe he thinks it almost as fine as Strawberry Hill.

We had a very pleasant comical dinner the other day at Mrs. Cholmeley's. We were only nine females; every thing was very elegant; but we were as merry as if there had been no magnificence; and we all agreed, that men were by no means so necessary as we had all been foolish enough to fancy. On Friday I was at a great dinner at Mrs. Montagu's. It was too numerous to be very agreeable, and we got off in the evening. We had a snug dinner last week at Lady Lyttleton's—only General Conway, Lady Aylesbury, and the Spanish Ambassador, the Marquis del Campo, a giddy, merry mortal, with great animal spirits, and no very shining parts. He has none of the supercilious gravity of his country, and you would rather take him for a frothy Frenchman than a proud Castilian.

Tell Dr. Stonehouse I have seen Mrs. Gardiner.

She is indeed a person of great excellence; her conversation is in heaven, whither she herself may be expected soon to go.

From the same to the same.

London, 1787.

I believe Patty will be a great fortune at last: for the ninth edition of my present to her,—'The Search after Happiness,' is gone to the press. I am really shocked at the public taste, which has taken off ten thousand copies of a poem which I have not patience to read.

One day last week I met at dinner Mrs. Siddons: she is a very fine woman; I never saw her before. I spent yesterday a sober quiet day at Lady Amherst's; and read Shakspeare to my Lord till eleven o'clock at night. Lady Amherst has great credit in the education of her young folks. I have had a long visit from Mrs. Trimmer. Her appearance, behaviour, and conversation are full of good sense and propriety. I hear that Brentford exhibits a visible change of manners, in consequence of her labours. She is the author whom I venture most to recommend. I made one lady take three dozen of her books yesterday. I presumed to give her a great deal of good wholesome advice about booksellers; for would you believe it, popular as I am persuaded she must be, she has got little or nothing by her writings, except reputation, and the consciousness of doing good: on which two things though I set all due value, yet where there are ten children,

money must have the eleventh place in maternal consideration.

I breakfasted on Sunday and Good Friday with the Bishop of Chester, who afterwards carried me to hear him preach; both times to my great delectation. Gibbon comes over in June, with three quarto volumes more of his 'Decline and Fall.' I have seen a letter from him, in which he says, 'these three volumes are somewhat slenderer, but not less laboured than their elder brothers.' Nor are they, I dare say, more free from the leaven of infidelity, which pervades every part of his works. I have been reading a new answer to him by Sir David Dalrymple, very acute and well-mannered. He manages the sly philosopher with great dexterity, and in a way which is more likely to affect a man of Gibbon's cool temper, than the rough blows and hard words of some of his other opponents.

I dined yesterday at Mrs. Montagu's. Mr. Pepys and I made an assignation for a quiet chat this evening at Mrs. Chapone's, where we three spent the pleasantest two or three hours imaginable. We all regretted that we do not get a great many more such, instead of wasting our time in great and promiscuous parties, where there can be little intercourse of mind or sentiment. For this snug party I refused one of the finest assemblies in London, which I knew would be very grand and very dull.

Mr. Pepys told me he had a great struggle whether to come to us or to go to Percy. At last he concluded to give up the child for the sake of the mother. They were astonished at my not

being there. I told them as I had been able to resist Shakepeare so many years, there was no great philosophy in withstanding the poet of that night. The next day I had another attack. I dined with Sir Joshua, Mr. Burke, and two or three others of that stamp. They cried all at once, 'were you not delighted with Mrs. Siddons last night in Percy?' I replied, 'No: for I did not see her.' They would not believe me guilty of such insensibility, adding, 'She did it exquisitely, as the tears of Mr. Fox, who sat with us, testified.'

To-day (Tuesday) I have been into the city to hear good Mr. Newton preach; and afterwards went and sat an hour with him, and came home with pockets full of sermons.

From the same to the same.

Hampton, 1787.

We are come to Hampton for a couple of days, to dissipate colds and gather violets. I never saw them in such perfection at this time of the year: every flower and shrub makes me long to see those in my own dear garden; which I think, when the apple-trees come to blow, must be in high beauty. I want to know if the new limes at the entrance prosper. We are going back to London as soon as we have dined, to be witnesses of its follies and vanities. I was invited last Sunday to Lady Charlotte Finch's, to meet the Duchess Dowager of Beaufort, who is pleased to say she has been seeking to be acquainted with me these two years: but

it being the day when those who fear their creditors go abroad, and those who fear God stay at home, I was deaf to the honour. I was at Lady Amherst's magnificent assembly last week: dull and foolish as assemblies are, yet it is diverting to see them once or twice in a year. A noble suite of rooms, filled with four hundred persons of the first rank, dressed in all the vanity of which the present fantastic fashions allow: but, alas! the eye is soon satisfied with seeing, and the ear has nothing to hear worth hearing. The Duke and Duchess of Cumberland came early: but the Prince of Wales did not arrive till near midnight. He was as usual all gaiety and gracefulness. He did me the honour to ask for me, and to tell me that he had often wished to see me.

To the same.

London, 1787.

We have been at Hampton for some days, to my great joy. It has much abated my head-aches. I had yesterday invitations to dine at the Bishop of Salisbury's, and Lord Bathurst's: but was engaged to Mr. Brooksbank, where were all the corps diplomatique, none of whom I thought pleasant, but Sir Joseph Yorke, our thirty years ambassador to Holland.

We had so fine a show of literati on Saturday at Lady Herries's, that somebody was saucy enough to say, that they pitied all other parties that evening, as ours seems to have monopolized all the wit and

learning. A card party would have thought us much greater objects of pity. I was at Mr. Cole's[1] the other evening, where were the Bishops of Chester and Peterborough, Soame Jenyns, Mr. Charles Yorke, Arthur Young, and many others. I tormented Mr. Symons, who succeeded the poet Gray as History Professor at Cambridge, to tell me all about Calabria and Sicily, which he has visited with such a classic spirit, as to make his accounts very pleasing. He is a very good-natured and modest man, and very kind and friendly to me.

John Home, the Scotch poet, breakfasted here yesterday. Douglas writes no more, but has hung up his harp as well as Percy. It is time for us both to take our leave of poetry. A friend of mine just come from Paris, told me a story of one of the *notables*. He was a provincial gentleman, of very good sense and learning, but whose coat was not of the newest Paris cut. He was sitting at dinner between two *petit maitres* of the first water, who agreed to roast the countryman; and accordingly began to assail him with the most impertinent curiosity. After patiently bearing their ill-breeding, he said to them, Gentlemen, I will gratify your desire to be acquainted with my character, *hé bien! donc; le voici, je suis ni sot, ni fat, mais je suis entre les deux*. This repartee procured him good treatment the rest of the dinner.

[1] A learned lawyer, at whose house she used to meet very select society.

To the same.

London, April, 1787.

We have been a whole week at Hampton, which I spent in strolling and reading. I enjoyed it prodigiously, and returned quite well; poor Mrs. Wilmot was with us, and made it very pleasant. She is so famous a reader of Shakspeare and Spenser, that we were quite poetical and pastoral. I spent a day at Lady Aylesbury's. In the evening there was a concert. It was quite *le temple des beaux arts*. Lady A. works portraits as Raphael paints them; and there was Mrs. Damer, to remind us of her famous dogs of exquisite sculpture; and there was my Lord Derby, to talk about his company of Richmond House comedians—(you know Lady Aylesbury is the Duchess of Richmond's mother); Lord Abingdon, and his band of musicians; for it was he who gave us the concert, in which he was the principal performer; and there was general Conway, poet to the ducal theatre. It would have made some of the old nobility stare, to have seen so many great personages descended from them, degenerated (as their noble pride would have called it), into geniuses, actors, artists, and poets. *Real* talent, however, never degrades.

I am just returned from an exhibition of pictures, among others, the famous one of St. Ambrose expelling the Emperor Theodosius from the church, for which £2000. has been refused: I assure you it was not *I* that offered it.

I have had the fortitude to resist the most obliging invitations into Kent, from Mrs. Bouverie, the Bishop of Chester, and Lady Amherst; the latter I could only get off from, by promising to visit her another year, at her fine place at Montreal; so named from my Lord's conquest of that place, and where the sovereigns have been guests. But I could tell them that the attractions of my thatched cottage are more irresistible than all their splendour. I must except the Bishop's, indeed, whose sweet little parsonage at Hunton has none of the dulness of magnificence, but is small enough for ease and enjoyment, especially with such a master and mistress as it boasts.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

Coleman Street Buildings, May 11, 1787.

MY DEAR MADAM,

A familiar style of address, you may say, upon so short an acquaintance: but may I not use it by anticipation? Thus, at this season of the year, we speak of a field of wheat, because though there may be some Londoners, who, from its green appearance, would pronounce it to be mere grass, we expect that it will produce ears of wheat, before the harvest arrives. So, from yesterday's specimen, Mrs. Newton and I judge that if you and we were so situated, as that our present slight acquaintance could be cultivated by frequent interviews, you would soon be very dear to us. And even now, from what I have seen, superadded to what I have

read and heard, my heart will not allow me to make a serious apology for taking the liberty to say—My dear Madam.

This waits upon you to thank you for your obliging call—to request your acceptance of the Fast Sermon—to express my best wishes for your welfare, and to assure you that I am, with great sincerity,

Your affectionate and obliged servant,

JOHN NEWTON.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Adelphi, May 18, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,

You see I adopt your friendly mode of address; and, I trust, with an equal degree of cordiality. Whenever I know any thing of a person's character and disposition beforehand, if it be of a meritorious kind, and especially if I have read and liked his writings, it saves me a great deal of trouble; for it cuts off all the long preliminaries of mere acquaintance, and I at once feel that degree of friendship for them which in other cases one does not arrive at but after much time and by slow gradations.

I should immediately have thanked you for your very acceptable present of books and pamphlets: but that I have been in hope, from day to day, of being able to wait on you with my personal thanks. As every morning has brought its hope, so every day has brought its disappointment; and as I am now on the point of leaving town, I see very little

chance of being able to indulge myself in a way I should like so well. I will not therefore any longer incur the censure of ingratitude, by delaying to thank you for your kind attention to me. Your little book to your dissenting friend, I opened the moment I came home, intending (for I was very busy) only to read a page or two; but I was so pleased with the candour, good sense, and Christian spirit of it, that I never laid it out of my hands while there was a page unread. I regret that your ideal academy cannot be realized. The large volume I leave unbroached for my country retirement, and expect to receive much profit and pleasure from it.

How could I write so much without saying a word of Mrs. Newton? Only, I suppose, because one generally saves the best for the last. Pray tell her, with my kind compliments, that I regret exceedingly the inconvenient distance between us, which puts it out of my power to cultivate an intimacy from which I am persuaded I should derive so much pleasure and advantage.

I heartily wish you all the comforts and blessings of this world, and in the next the high reward promised to those who turn many to righteousness.

I am, dear Sir,
with much regard, your obliged and faithful
humble servant,
H. More.

From the same to the same.

Adelphi, May 31, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many thanks for your very kind letter, and the affectionate interest you are so good as to take in my welfare. It is worth while to be a little sick, were it only to try the kindness of one's friends. I have had a good deal of fever, which is now, I thank God, much abated, though my cough remains: but as I am going out of town almost immediately, I trust that the pure air and quiet of the country will be of service. I am sometimes inwardly rejoiced when a slight indisposition furnishes me with a lawful pretence for not keeping a visiting engagement: but this was far from being the case on Friday last, when I had figured to myself that I should derive not only pleasure but profit from the society I should have found there. But you have said so many consolatory things upon the subject, and have put me in the way of drawing so much good out of these little accidental evils, that I hope I shall be the better, not only from this disappointment, but also from many future ones, for some of the hints you have suggested.

I am thoroughly persuaded of the necessity of seeing and acknowledging the hand of providence in the smaller as well as in the greater events of life: but I want more of the *practical* persuasion of this great truth. Pray for me, my good sir, that I may be enabled to obtain more firmness of mind,

a more submissive spirit, and more preparedness, not only for death itself, but for the common evils of life.

I shall look forward with pleasure to the hope of seeing you in my little thatched hermitage during the summer, and am, very truly,

My dear Sir,

Your much obliged and sincere friend,

HANNAH MORE.

From H. More to her sister.

London, June 1787.

The Duchess-dowager of Beaufort asked me a great many questions about Cowslip Green, when I met her lately at Lady Juliana Penn's, where was a large party, all of noble ladies, except my plebeian self. I dined on Friday at the Bishop of Salisbury's, and had the honour of meeting yesterday, his grace of Canterbury, and an episcopal group, at the Bishop of Chester's. So for a person who has long protested against going out any more, I keep it up pretty well; but am joyful to say that my last moments are at hand. I close my London life by dining at Mr. Batt's on Friday. On the 8th, I propose to set off at five in the morning, and stay with Dr. Stonehouse till the 11th. Mrs. Boscawen wrung from me my slow consent to sit for my picture to Opie: I would not have done it for anybody else.

CHAPTER III.

In the month of June in this year, Miss H. More returned to Cowslip Green; and during the summer and autumn of the same year, the following letters passed between her and her friends.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Cowslip Green, 1787.

My dearest Mrs. Carter,

I left London the 9th of June, after dining the last day at my neighbour's, Mrs. Batt's, with your friend and admirer Mr. Hawkins Browne, Mr. Pepys, and the two Cambridges, where we talked down not only the sun, but the moon also. I journeyed on to Bristol, near which I met an object which engaged my tenderest affections in a painful manner; it was the funeral procession, all decked with milk-white plumes, of the now-angel daughter of your friend, Lady Cremorne. Poor Lord and Lady Cremorne! I hear they bear this last blow with noble resignation.

You will easily imagine my regret to learn, at

my return, that I had spent some time at the Castle at Marlborough, while poor Lady Harriet C—— was actually in the house, engaged in the sad duty of attending her dying son. O, if I had suspected it! That excellent family has lately had many hard trials: may they be sanctified to them!

I had the satisfaction to find my little garden very flourishing; very few shrubs dead, the flowers multiplied beyond my hope, and the turf of a little spot (which I am afraid we are magnificent enough to call a lawn,) of a verdure uncommonly bright. I am sorry to owe the beauty of my vegetation to such incessant and violent rains as have, I fear, half ruined the poor farmers in my neighbourhood.

I live so much out of the world, that not a newspaper brings me the history of what passes in it; and the Princess of Orange had been run away with, Miss Cholmeley married, Mr. Gambier dead, and the little Montagu born, weeks before I ever heard that such events had taken place.

I am sure you rejoiced with me on the removal of our excellent friend to the see of London,—a station in which his hands will be so much strengthened, and his power of doing good so widely extended. I rejoice for many reasons, but for none more than that his ecclesiastical jurisdiction extending to the West Indies, will make him of infinite usefulness in the great object I have so much at heart,—the project to abolish the slave trade in Africa. This most important cause has very much occupied my thoughts this summer; the

young gentleman[1] who has embarked in it with the zeal of an apostle, has been much with me, and engaged all my little interest, and all my affections in it. It is to be brought before parliament in the spring. Above one hundred members have promised their votes. My dear friend, be sure to canvass every body who has a heart: It is a subject too ample for a letter, and I shall have a great deal to say to you on it when we meet. To my feelings, it is the most interesting subject which was ever discussed in the annals of humanity. When you come to town, I will send you the heads of it.

I am delighted with an old book, but new to me, which I have lately met with—'Smith's Discourses.'[2] Some of them are too metaphysical for me, but all are full of sterling sense and evangelical piety.

Adieu, my most excellent friend,

Yours, most faithfully,

HANNAH MORE.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Cowslip Green, June, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

It is no encouragement to be good, when it is so profitable to do evil: and I shall grow wicked upon principle, and ungrateful by system. If I thought that not answering one letter would always procure me two such, I would be as silent as ingratitude, bad taste, and an unfeeling heart, can

[1] Mr. Wilberforce. [2] John Smith, of Queen's College, Cambridge.

cause the most undeserving to be. I did, indeed, receive your first obliging letter, and intended, in the true spirit of a Bristol trader, to have sent you some of my worthless beads, and bits of glass, in exchange for your ivory and gold dust, but a very tedious nervous headache has made me less than ever qualified to traffic with you in this dishonest way, and I have been so little accustomed to connect your idea with that of pain and uneasiness, that I know not how to set about the strange association; but I am now better, and would not have named being sick at all, if there were any other apology in the world that would have justified my not writing. Mrs. Carter and I are agreed that your wit is by no means the cause of our esteem for you; because you cannot *help* having it if you would: and I never in my life could be attached to any one for their wit, if wit was the best thing they had. It is an established maxim with me, that the truest objects of warm attachment are the small parts of great characters. I never considered the patriot Brutus with any delight as the asserter of freedom, and as 'refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate;' no, it is the gentle, compassionate Brutus that engages my affection, who refused to disturb the slumbers of the poor boy who attended him, in that anxious night when he destroyed himself, and so much needed his services. So when I sit in a little hermitage I have built in my garden, *not to be melancholy in,* but to think upon my friends, and to read their works, and their letters, Mr. Walpole seldomer presents himself to my mind

as the man of wit, than as the tender-hearted and humane friend of my dear infirm, broken-spirited Mrs. Vesey. We admire talents, and admiration is a cold sentiment, with which affection has commonly nothing to do, but we more than admire them when they are devoted to such gentle purposes. My very heart is softened when I consider that she is now out of the way of your kind attentions, and I fear that nothing else on earth gives her the smallest pleasure. But I shall make you sad, and myself too, if I write any longer in this strain, for I do love her with a tender affection, and cannot but take a warm interest in every thing that is either useful or pleasant to her. Even in this affecting decay of her sweet mind, her heart retains all its amiableness unimpaired. Her purity rather resembles that innocence which is the ignorance of evil, than that virtue which is the conquest over it. But I am running on just as if you did not know and love her as well as I do! I hope she is gone to Tunbridge, which will amuse her a little, though it can do her no good.

I am become a perfect outlaw from all civil society and regular life. I spend almost my whole time in my little garden, 'which mocks my scant manuring.' From 'morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve,' I am employed in raising dejected pinks, and reforming disorderly honeysuckles.

Yours, dear Sir, very faithfully,

H. M.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, 1787.

Lady Middleton came here as soon as she heard I had arrived, and I spent the same evening with her in Hertford Street. I heard from both Sir Charles and Mr. Morton Pitt, that Mr. Wilberforce had told the House he should bring in a bill, after the holidays, for the abolition of the Slave Trade. Mr. Fox went up to him, and told him he should heartily concur with him in that measure; that he had thoughts of bringing in such a bill himself, but was very glad it was in so much better hands.

I found an invitation from Mrs. Wilmot, to spend the Christmas at Farnborough Place, but I am already disposed of.

On Saturday we dined at Mrs. Montagu's in a snug family way, and had a great deal of pleasant talk. Her health and spirits are in perfection. I hope I have engaged her heartily in the interest of the blacks.

Yesterday I dined and spent the whole day with the Middletons. It was given up entirely to negro business, and all other company was excluded. I enclose Mr. Ramsay's pointed and most sensible pamphlet, and let all the flesh-and-blood merchants in the world answer it if they can.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

1787.

DEAR MADAM,

On my return home yesterday, I was greatly mortified when I understood that I had lost the pleasure of seeing you and your friends from Hertford Street. I have been daily punished for giving way to fashion, and setting out upon a round of ceremonious visits; some of them, too, I confess, to very good sort of people whom perhaps I shall never find at home: so I have been punished by missing those whom I wished most to see. I was, however, a little consoled to find that you had left a blessing behind you: for so in truth I deem your little book to be.[1] I was charmed with it, and am impatient to see it in the hands of every man and woman of condition in London and Westminster. The errata are not certainly numerous or important enough to delay the publication a moment. They may be easily corrected in all the copies with the pen. The motto might be added in the same manner, or printed on a little scrap of paper, and pasted on, or a new title page might be printed in a few hours, if you thought it worth-while. Were I to make any cavil, it would be to doubt whether the criminality of negative compared with positive sin is not expressed a little too strongly in pages 68 and 69. But this I say *currente calamo*, and without

[1] 'Thoughts on the Manners of the Great.'

sufficient time for consideration. Upon the whole, I must say that it is a most delicious morsel, and I almost envy you the good that it will do. It will be an excellent precursor to our society, and do half its business beforehand.

I am delighted to hear that your poetry will so soon follow your prose. If it be equally good in its kind, I desire nothing more. You have given me a keen appetite for it, I assure you; and I am such an epicure, that though I have feasted sumptuously on the first course, I wait with eagerness for the delicacies of the second.

Your illness gave us all the truest concern. Pray take care of your health, for the sake of the public and your friends. For where, now that Soame Jenyns is gone, can we find any one but yourself that can make the 'fashionable world' read books of morality and religion, and find improvement when they are only looking for amusement?

I am, dear Madam,
With great esteem,
Your most faithful
and obedient servant,
B. LONDON.

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I longed to hear from you, or to see you; and because my longing proved of such long continuance, I feared you continued ill. Your late kind note gratified my wishes, and relieved my appre-

hensions: and from the hour I received it, I have been watching for an interval of leisure to thank you for it.

Your poem was soon followed by a little book, addressed to the great. In the blank leaf there was written, 'from the author.' As to the rest I was for a time in suspense, but I believe the prevalence of public reports will now authorize me to thank you for it. I wish I had it before me, but when I had read it rather hastily over, one borrowed it, and then another, and it is still travelling about amongst my friends. I congratulate you on the performance, and especially on your choice of a subject. You could easily write what would procure you more general applause. But it is a singular privilege to have a *consecrated* pen, and to be able and willing to devote our talents to the cause of God and religion. There are no persons whom I more compassionate, or of whom I am more afraid, than some of those whom you so well describe, under the character of good sort of people. If I am lawfully called into the company of the profligate, I am too much shocked to be in great danger of being hurt by them. I feel myself in the situation of the traveller, when assaulted by the north wind. The vehemence of the wind makes me wrap my cloak the faster about me. But when I am with your good sort of people, I am like the same traveller when under the powerful beams of the sun; the insinuating warmth puts me insensibly off my guard, and I am in danger of voluntarily dropping the cloak, which could not be

forced from me by downright violence. The circle of politeness, elegance, and taste, unless a higher spirit and principle predominate, is to me an enchanted spot, which I seldom enter without fear, and seldom retire from without loss.

My account of the slave trade has the merit of being true. I am not afraid of being solidly contradicted by any or by all, who are retained by interest to plead on the other side. Some of my friends wish I had said more, but I think I have said enough. They who (admitting that my testimony is worthy of credit,) are not convinced by what I have offered, would hardly be persuaded by a folio filled with particular details of misery and oppression. What may be done just now, I know not, but I think this infamous traffic cannot last long; at least this is my hope. But after the period of investigation, should it still be persevered in, I think it will constitute a national sin, and of a very deep dye. I should tremble for the consequences; for whatever politicians may think, I assuredly know there is a righteous Judge who governs the earth. He calls upon us to redress the injured, and should we perversely refuse, I cannot doubt but he will plead his cause himself.

You speak of the great distance between the Adelphi and Coleman Street Buildings;—to me they seem almost contiguous. If I knew the convenient season, I would soon convince you that I thought it but a step. However, the penny-post affords a sort of bridge over the gulf between us, and by this medium we may converse whenever we please.

I add Mrs. Newton's affectionate respects to my own, and remain,

My dear Madam,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN NEWTON.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. John Newton.

Cowslip Green, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am really extremely obliged to you for your very agreeable and instructive letter. Whenever I receive a letter or a visit, I always feel pleased and grateful in proportion to the value I set on the time of the visitor or the writer; and when a friend who knows how to work up to advantage all the ends and fragments of his time, is so good as to bestow a little portion of it on me, my heart owns the obligation; and I wish it were understood as preliminary in all acquaintance, that where no good can be done and no pleasure given, it will be so unprofitable a commerce as to be hardly worth engaging in. I am sure your letter gave me pleasure, and I hope it did me good, so you see it is doubly included in the treaty.

Excepting one month that I have passed at Bath on account of health, and occasional visits to my sisters at Bristol—in this pretty quiet cottage, which I built myself two years ago, I have spent the summer. It is about ten miles from Bristol, on the Exeter road, has a great deal of very picturesque scenery about it, and is the most perfect little her-

mitage that can be conceived. The care of my garden gives me employment, health, and spirits. I want to know, dear Sir, if it is peculiar to myself to form ideal plans of perfect virtue, and to dream of all manner of imaginary goodness in untried circumstances, while one neglects the immediate duties of one's actual situation? Do I make myself understood? I have always fancied that if I could secure to myself such a quiet retreat as I have now really accomplished, that I should be wonderfully good; that I should have leisure to store my mind with such and such maxims of wisdom; that I should be safe from such and such temptations; that in short my whole summers would be smooth periods of peace and goodness. Now the misfortune is, I have actually found a great deal of the comfort I expected, but without any of the concomitant virtues. I am certainly happier here than in the agitation of the world, but I do not find that I am one bit better; with full *leisure* to rectify my heart and affections, the disposition unluckily does not come. I have the mortification to find that petty and (as they are called) innocent employments, can detain my heart from heaven as much as tumultuous pleasures. If to the pure all things are pure, the reverse must be also true when I can contrive to make so harmless an employment as the cultivation of flowers stand in the room of a vice, by the great portion of time I give up to it, and by the entire dominion it has over my mind. You will tell me that if the affections be estranged from their proper object, it signifies not much whether a bunch of roses or a pack of cards

effects it. I pass my life in intending to get the better of this, but life is passing away, and the reform never begins. It is a very significant saying, though a very old one, of one of the Puritans, that 'Hell is paved with good intentions.' I sometimes tremble to think how large a square my procrastination alone may furnish to this tesselated pavement.

I shall come London-ward next month, but shall be only geographically nearer you, as I pass much of the winter at Hampton. I shall gladly seize every opportunity of cultivating your friendship, and must still regret that your house and the Adelphi are so wide of each other. I heartily commend myself to your prayers, and am with the most cordial esteem, dear Sir, your much obliged and faithful,

H. More.

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

1787.

My dear Madam,

It is high time to thank you for your favour of the first of November. Indeed I have been thinking so, for two or three weeks past, and perhaps it is well for you that my engagements will not permit me to write when I please.

Your hermitage—my imagination went to work at that, and presently built one. I will not say positively as pretty as yours, but very pretty. It stood (indeed, without a foundation) upon a southern declivity, fronting a woodland prospect, with an infant river, that is a brook, running between.

Little thought was spent upon the house, but if I could describe the garden, the sequestered walks, and the beautiful colours with which the soil, the shrubs, and the thickets were painted, I think you would like the spot. But I awoke, and behold it was a dream! My dear friend William Cowper has hardly a stronger enthusiasm for rural scenery than myself, and my favourite turn was amply indulged during the sixteen years I lived at Olney. The noises which surround me in my present situation, of carriages and carts, and London cries, form a strong contrast to the sound of falling waters, and the notes of thrushes and nightingales. But London, noisy and dirty as it is, is my post: and if not directly my choice, has a much more powerful recommendation; it was chosen for me by the wisdom and goodness of Him, whose I trust I am, and whom it is my desire to serve. And therefore I am well satisfied with it: and if this busy imagination (always upon the wing,) would go to sleep, I would not awaken her to build me hermitages; I want none.

The prospect of a numerous and attentive congregation, with which I am favoured from the pulpit, exceeds all that the mountains and lakes of Westmoreland can afford; and *their* singing, when their eyes tell me their voices come from the heart, is more melodious in my ear, than the sweetest music of the woods. But were I not a servant who has neither right nor reason to wish for himself, yet has the noblest wish he is capable of forming, gratified, I say, were it not for my public services,

and I were compelled to choose for myself, I would wish to live near your hermitage, that I might sometimes have the pleasure of conversing with you, and admiring your flowers and garden; provided I could likewise at proper seasons, hear from others that joyful sound, which it is now the business, the happiness, and the honour of my life to proclaim, myself. What you are pleased to say, my dear Madam, of the state of your mind, I understand perfectly well; I praise God on your behalf, and I hope I shall earnestly pray for you. I have stood upon that ground myself. I see what you yet want to set you quite at ease, and though I cannot give it you, I trust that He who has already taught you what to desire, will in his own best time do every thing for you, and in you, which is necessary to make you as happy as is compatible with the present state of infirmity and warfare; but He must be waited *on*, and waited *for*, to do this; and for our encouragement it is written, as in golden letters, over the gate of his mercy, "Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." We are apt to wonder that when what we accounted hindrances are removed, and the things which we conceived would be great advantages, are put within our power, still there is a secret something in the way which proves itself to be independent of all external changes, because it is not affected by them. The disorder we complain of is *internal*, and in allusion to our Lord's words upon another occasion, I may say, it is not that which surrounds us, it is not any thing in our out-

ward situation, (provided it be not actually unlawful,) that can prevent or even retard our advances in religion; we are defiled and impeded by that which is within. So far as our hearts are right, all places and circumstances, which his wise and good providence allots us, are nearly equal; their hindrances will prove helps; losses, gains,—and crosses will ripen into comforts; but till we are so far apprised of the nature of our disease, as to put ourselves into the hands of the great and only physician, we shall find, like the woman in Luke viii. 43, that every other effort for relief will leave us as it found us.

Our first thought when we begin to be displeased with ourselves, and sensible that we have been wrong, is to attempt to reform; to be sorry for what is amiss, and to endeavour to amend. It seems reasonable to ask, what can we do more? but while we think we can do so much as this, we do not fully understand the design of the gospel. This gracious message from the God who knows our frame, speaks home to our case. It treats us as sinners,—as those who have already broken the original law of our nature, in departing from God our creator, supreme lawgiver, and benefactor, and in having lived to ourselves instead of devoting all our time, talents, and influence to his glory. As sinners, the first things we need are pardon, reconciliation, and a principle of life and conduct entirely new. Till then we can have no more success or comfort from our endeavours, than a man who should attempt to walk while his ankle was dislocated: the bone must

be reduced before he can take a single step with safety, or attempt it without increasing his pain. For these purposes we are directed to Jesus Christ, as the wounded Israelites were to look at the brazen serpent, John iii. 14, 15. When we understand what the scripture teaches of the person, love, and offices of Christ, the necessity and final causes of his humiliation unto death, and feel our own need of such a Saviour; we then know him to be the light, the sun of the world and of the soul; the source of all spiritual light, life, comfort, and influence; having access by God to him, and receiving out of his fulness grace for grace.

Our perceptions of these things are for a time faint and indistinct, like the peep of dawn; but the dawning light, though faint, is the sure harbinger of approaching day, Prov. iv. 18. The full-grown oak that overtops the wood, spreads its branches wide, and has struck its roots to a proportionable depth and extent into the soil, arises from a little acorn; its daily growth, had it been daily watched from its appearance above ground, would have been imperceptible, yet it was always upon the increase; it has known a variety of seasons, it has sustained many a storm, but in time it attained to maturity, and now is likely to stand for ages. The beginnings of spiritual life are small likewise in the true Christian; *he* likewise passes through a succession of various dispensations, but he advances, though silently and slowly, yet surely; and will stand for ever.

At the same time it must be admitted, that the

Christian life is a warfare. Much within us and much without us must be resisted. In such a world as this, and with such a nature as *our's*, there will be a call for habitual self-denial. We must learn to cease from depending upon our own supposed wisdom, power, and goodness, and from self-complacence and self-seeking—that we may rely upon him whose wisdom and power are infinite.

It is time to relieve you, I shall therefore only add Mrs. Newton's affectionate respects. Commending you to the care and blessing of the Almighty,

I remain, my dear Madam,
with great sincerity,
Your affectionate and obliged servant,
JOHN NEWTON.

From H. More to her Sister.

Boyle Farm, 1787.

I never was so astonished as to see this large and very elegant house already completely furnished; all the beautiful purple and gold pilasters of the magnificent library, the chimney pieces, sculpture as well as painting, both designed and executed by Miss Boyle.[1] The doors are adorned with rich paintings, copied from the Vatican; the pannels, pictures, emblematical of the arts and sciences, from Herculaneum, all done by that young lady in the short space of a year!

[1] Afterwards Lady Henry Fitzgerald.

Mr. Soame Jenyns is dead! what a bright sun is there set. It is great comfort to reflect that it did not set obscured with those dark doubts of the truth of the Christian religion which hung over him for so many years; and that as soon as his own views became brighter, he had the honesty to wish to clear up those of others. I trust he now 'knows as he is known.' As to wit, humour, gentle manners and pure taste, I hardly know his equal; but I should not now contemplate even these amiable qualities with any satisfaction, if I were not persuaded he died a sincere believer. He has left the copyright of all his works to my friend Mr. Cole. His will expressed his desire that poor Mrs. Jenyns should make her's directly: and, accordingly, she did so the next day: think of such a task at such a time! How Mr. Cole, Mrs. Boscawen, and I shall mourn when we meet.

The reader will have collected from the many reflections which are incidentally scattered over these letters, that neither the fascinations of wit and talent, nor the splendour of rank and affluence, with which the subject of this memoir was surrounded, had obscured her spiritual discernment, or rendered her blind to that fatal levity, that indifference to religion, and that disregard to the sacredness of the Sabbath, which prevailed in the higher ranks of society. She perceived all this, indeed, with all the sorrow natural to a mind full

of Christian sympathy; but she felt it her duty to do something more than lament,—she resolved, with a righteous courage, to raise her voice against it. It is impossible duly to appreciate the value of the effort she made in publishing her work on 'THE MANNERS OF THE GREAT,' without considering that her's were not the animadversions of a recluse, but of one who was flattered, admired, and courted by the very people whose vices and follies she was about to reprove; and these, too, persons whom she was in the daily habit of meeting, and whose attentions were supposed to confer great distinction. Nor let it be forgotten that this publication was not the product of a censorious temper, but of a heart and understanding nobly engaged in the cause of God, and of the soul. She could not be ignorant that this step might probably exclude her from those circles in which she had hitherto been so conspicuous and so caressed; but the happiness of her friends was dearer to her than their favour. Thus was a new era entered upon in the literary life of our author. She now began to dedicate her powerful talents to the more immediate service of God, and the benefit of his rational creatures, and made her first direct advance in the walk of a Christian moralist,—that walk in which she afterwards proceeded, with "her mind stayed upon Him" who "holdeth up the goings of his people in the way of his commandments."

From H. More to her Sister.

London, 1788.

For this last week I have been writing all day, and half the night, either in prose or in verse. My book is now before the public, with its sounding title, 'Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society.' I really was fearful lest many of those with whom I live a good deal, might think that my own views and their's were too much alike. Occasions, indeed, continually occur in which I speak honestly and pointedly; but all one can do in a promiscuous society is not so much to start religious topics, as to extract from common subjects some useful and awful truth, and to counteract the mischief of a popular sentiment by one drawn from religion; and if I do any little good, it is in this way; and this they will in a degree endure. Fine people are ready enough to join you in reprobating vice; for they are not *all* vicious; but their standard of right is low; it is not the standard of the gospel. In this little book I have not gone deep; it is but a superficial view of the subject; it is confined to prevailing practical evils. Should this succeed, I hope, by the blessing of God, another time to attack more strongly the *principle*. I have not owned myself the author; not so much because of that fear of man, which "worketh a snare," as because, if anonymous, it may be ascribed to some better person; and because I fear I do not live

as I write. I hope it may be useful to myself, at least as I give a sort of public pledge of my principles, to which I pray I may be enabled to act up.

I am now busily engaged on a poem, to be called 'Slavery.' I grieve I did not set about it sooner; as it must now be done in such a hurry as no poem should ever be written in, to be properly correct; but good or bad, if it does not come out at the particular moment when the discussion comes on in parliament, it will not be worth a straw. This I shall bring out in an open honourable manner, with my name staring in the front; but the other is to be a clandestine birth; so be sure not a word on the subject. The Bishop of London carried me to make several visits the other morning; among others, to Mrs. Delany, who seemed quite rejoiced to see me. She is as lively and as agreeable as ever, and her extreme sensibility puts me in mind of a remark Mr. Burke once made to me, 'that she was almost the only person he ever saw, who at eighty-eight blushed like a girl.'

'From the same to the same.

London, Jan. 11, 1788.

On Tuesday we dined a very select little party in Portman Square, all gentlemen, except Mrs. Montagu and ourselves. Sir Joshua, Mr. Jerningham, Mr. Walpole, and Dr. Blagdon, a new blue-stocking, and a very agreeable one. He is secretary to the Royal Society; so modest, so sensible, and so knowing, that he exemplifies Pope's line, 'Willing

to teach, and yet not proud to know.' The next day I had one of our pleasant, confidential, serious *tête-a-tête* dinners with Mrs. Boscawen; she was as usual, all affection, and said to me, 'I love you for yourself, but others who may appear equally fond of you, love you because you are the fashion:' this is so true, that I could name more than one, who, provided I could entertain them, would not care though my heart ached. Mr. Walpole has asked Mrs. Boscawen's leave to have a copy of my picture, which hangs in the most conspicuous part of her drawing-room. Mrs. Walsingham has desired to take one herself for her library, and Lady Middleton intends to copy it if she can get leave; if they do obtain it, it will be without my consent, and against my will.[1]

The next day we dined with our pleasant neighbour, Mr. Batt. He set us down in the evening at Mrs. Vesey's: poor soul! a bright ray of joy broke through her clouded mind at sight of her friends. Did I tell you that Percy was bespoken by Mons. de Calonne, and that this late Premier of France translated it into French, and wished to see it acted here previous to getting it up in Paris! The next day we dined at Lord Mount Edgecombe's; Mr. Walpole, who had been seeing Percy the night before, quite raved at me for not going. He was in raptures with Mrs. Siddons. All this printing work coming together has engrossed my time so much, that I should have been distracted

[1] This picture is now in the possession of Lady Olivia Sparrow.

if I had dined out every day, and it has been a very pleasant confinement; for I have had a Walpole, or a Montagu, or a Porteus, or a Barrington every day. The slave cause gains proselytes, and of course opposers, every day. Mr. Wilberforce has not been well; so the day for bringing it on is not yet named. My little poem on Slavery is too short and too much hurried; it of course will be very imperfect; for I did not begin it till a fortnight ago. I would on no account bring out so slight and so hasty a thing on any less pressing occasion, but here time is everything.

From the same to the same.

London, 1788.

I had a kind visit from Dr. Heberden the other day, to thank me for my book which I had sent him, though without a name; but he guessed it was mine, and he did thank me indeed in a most liberal manner, by giving me for the poor Louisa a ten pound bank note. Yesterday, as Mrs. Garrick and I were chatting, I fell on the adventures of the poor B——'s, with which she was much interested, and gave me a bank-note of ten pounds towards furnishing the house. No end of my good fortune this week, as you know, if you have seen the Hayneses. I was telling one day the history of the piety, losses, and sufferings of this good clergyman to Mrs. Bouverie, not, I confess, quite guiltless of design, and she made me a present of a twenty pound bank-note for them.

I will send you Johnson's Letters as soon as I can. You need not be very much in a hurry. There is little to gratify curiosity, or to justify impatience. They are such Letters as ought to have been *written*, but ought never to have been *printed*. Still they are the true letters of friendship, which are meant to show kindness rather than wit. Every place to which he was invited, every dose of physic he took, every body who sent to ask how he did, is recorded. I can read them with a degree of interest, because I knew and loved the man; and besides, was often a party concerned in the dinners he mentions. A few of these letters are very good; sometimes he is moral, and sometimes he is kind—two points of view in which it is always agreeable to consider Johnson. I am often named, never with unkindness, sometimes with favour. The imprudence of editors and executors is an additional reason why men of parts should be afraid to die. Burke said to me the other day, in allusion to the innumerable lives, anecdotes, remains, &c. which have been published of Johnson, —'How many maggots have crawled out of that great body!' There are some good sprightly letters from Mrs. Thrale herself; but it is odd to print one's own letters while one is alive and merry.

From the same to the same.

London, 1788.

When I had got rid of all my printing cares and incumbrances, I went to Hampton again for a few days, which quite carried off my cold. The *secret* book seems to make its way very much in the great world; but the demon of suspicion is awakened, I am afraid, not to be lulled to sleep; however, we own nothing. At first, it was currently said to be Mr. Wilberforce's: Lord Elgin came to the Bishop of London's, and assured them of this as a certain fact; but, unfortunately, going from the Bishop to call on Mr. W. he found him reading it, and extolling it, which put an end to *that* conjecture. Then it was as confidently reported to be the Bishop himself, till somebody recollected that the author had said he was not a clergyman. I received an anonymous epigram the other day, but I think I know the hand. Here it is—

Of sense and religion in this little book
All agree there's a wonderful store;
But while round the world for an *author* they look,
I only am wishing for *More*.[1]

I am a little frightened; but nobody has betrayed me; it is only by the internal evidence that it is guessed at. When the author is discovered, I shall expect to find almost every door shut against me:—*mais n'importe*, I shall only be sent to my darling

[1] It was Mrs. Walsingham's.

retirement. I spent Saturday evening at Lady Amherst's; the *book* lay on the table—several of the company took it up, talked it over, and Mr. Pepys looked me through; so that I never had such difficulty to keep my countenance. A day or two before, I dined at the Bishop of Salisbury's; I was obliged to sit to hear him, Mrs. Montagu, and the Bishop of Lincoln talk it over with the greatest warmth; all commended it, though some of the company thought it rather too strict, but the bishops justified it.

As to '*Slavery*,' I know not what degree of success it has in the world at large; among the critics it is in pretty good odour; my two favourite bishops commend it, and I have had very polite and flattering letters from the Bishops of Llandaff, Peterborough, &c.; and very pleasant ones from the Dean of Canterbury and Dean Tucker, some of which I inclose.

H. More to her Sister.

I had not seen Mr. Wilberforce for an age, on account of my confinement, and his engagements. He sent me last week a note entreating I would meet him for one hour at Sir Charles Middleton's, but I was not able to comply. The other day, just as I was going to dinner, arrived Lady Middleton, saying, I must at all events come away with her immediately to dine with Mr. Wilberforce at her house. We had four or five hours of most confidential and instructive conversation, in which we

discussed all the great objects of reform which they have in view.

Mr. Owen Cambridge came to breakfast with us yesterday, and brought, himself, a very pleasant letter about my poem. As he was sitting with Mrs. Garrick on one side, and me on the other, he suddenly started up, and said he was one of the most unfortunate men in the world, for he was between *popery* and *slavery*. In this letter, and in another from Mr. Walpole, both conclude with styling themselves my *slave*.

H. More to her sister.

Lady Juliana Penn came to thank me for the compliment paid to her name and the quakers, in the little poem of *Slavery*.

I was over-persuaded by Lord and Lady Amherst to go to the trial, and heard Burke's famous speech of three hours and a quarter without intermission. Such a splendid and powerful oration I never heard, but it was abusive and vehement beyond all conception. Poor Hastings sitting by and looking so meek, to hear himself called *villain*, and *cut-throat*, &c.! The recapitulation of the dreadful cruelties in India, was worked up to the highest pitch of eloquence and passion, till the orator was seized with a spasm which made him incapable of speaking another word, and I did not know whether he might not have died in the exertion of his powers, like *Chatham*. I think I never felt such indignation as

when Burke, with Sheridan standing on one side, and Fox on the other, said, 'Vice incapacitates a man from all public duty, it withers the powers of his understanding, and makes his mind paralytic.' I looked at his two neighbours, and saw they were quite free from any symptom of palsy.

I am in trouble for Mrs. Delany. I was with her on Saturday; she was perfectly well, and gay; but that very night was taken with a fever, and has lain dangerously ill ever since. At eighty-eight, one ought to be more willing to resign her; but all her friends are in as much anxiety about her as if she had not long been preparing for a better life. I picked up some French to-day which will please Harriet Rodd. I saw for the first time in my life the renowned John Wilkes; he is very entertaining; the talk falling upon bad French, he gave us some specimens of the boarding-school French, where his daughter was educated. When anybody came to fetch them home, they used to go up to their governess and say, '*Madame, Je suis venu pour.*' Mr. Walpole continues his persecution of me about *Puritanism.* We spent the evening together on Saturday at Mr. Pepys's. Mr. Wilberforce sent yesterday a note to Sir Charles Middleton, to say that he and his sister were come to town for a single day, but he did not intend to appear to any body, as he was so ill, but would come and dine there, and begged if it were possible, they would get me to meet him. I staid of course. He appeared to be in bad health, yet he was cheerful and animated; and even in this condition, his zeal for doing

good, the projects of his head and heart for serving people, and the ardour of his piety, were quite edifying.

Alas! Mrs. Delany is dead. She was perfectly sensible, holding a gentleman by the hand, and telling him how full her life had been of blessings; and that what she had to look forward to, was still inexpressibly happier than all she had already enjoyed. How is that noble society of ancient days, which I used to meet in her little room, broken up, since I had the honour of being admitted there! Duchess of Manchester, Dowager Lady Gower, Duchess of Portland, Mrs. Delany herself—all gone!

Since writing the above, I have had a note from Cadell, to say a fourth edition of 'Manners of the Great' must be put to press immediately; the third came out and was sold off in four hours on Saturday. Is it not unaccountable? Cadell says almost all the Bishops have told him the book is mine; so now when taxed with it, my friends do not deny it, though I have not owned it myself in words.

The Bishop and Mrs. Porteus are already gone to take possession of the Palace at Fulham, having left London for good; but they are so near that we shall be no great losers. With the most affectionate kindness they both pressed me to go and spend some time with them, and they would nurse me, and cure my cough. They were so earnest in this request, that I certainly should have accepted it, if I had not been quite well. I have however promised to spend a few days with them before I go to Bristol.

Yesterday I visited Mr. Walpole, he said not a word of the little sly book, but took me to task in general terms for having exhibited such monstrously severe doctrines. I knew he alluded to the 'Manners of the Great,' but we pretended not to understand one another, and it was a most ridiculous conversation. He defended (and that was the joke)—religion against me, and said he would do so against the whole bench of Bishops; that the Fourth Commandment was the most amiable and merciful law that ever was promulgated, as it entirely considers the ease and comfort of the hard-labouring poor, and beasts of burden; but that it never was intended for persons of fashion, who have no occasion to rest, as they never do any thing on the other days; and indeed at the time the law was made, there were no people of fashion. He really pretended to be in earnest, and we parted mutually unconverted; he lamenting that I am fallen into the heresy of *puritanical* strictness, and I lamenting that he is a person of fashion, for whom the Ten Commandments were not made.

To the same.

London, 1788.

I was invited to Fulham to hear the Bishop preach for the first time in his own chapel on Sunday, and afterwards to spend the day with him. I went with the Middletons; they have a charming place quite complete already; fine grounds, and every thing about them this world can give, while I trust they

are preparing themselves and others for a better. I was quite delighted to see them in a situation which will enlarge his influence and usefulness; we went to chapel twice. I am astonished at the unexpected and undeserved popularity of 'The Manners,' it is in the houses of all the great. Did I tell you that some time ago Mr. Smelt walked up to me and said without any preface, 'Well, the ladies will give up every thing but the Sunday hairdresser.' You may be sure I looked very wise.

The fifth edition of 'Manners of the Great' has been in the press above a week. I have only read the preface and one chapter of the three new volumes of Gibbon's book. The same gorgeous diction, the same sneers at Christianity, and the same affectation of the French manner, which tainted the first volumes: yet it very fully supplies a vast chasm of information, and must always be considered as an important work. It has much merit, more mischief. I have just received a card of invitation from a Countess to a concert next SUNDAY, with a conditional postscript, 'if I ever do such a thing on a Sunday;' and I have sent for answer, that *I never do such a thing*. After such a public testimony as I have given, one would have thought I should have escaped such an invitation. I was at a large dinner yesterday at Mrs. Montagu's, who sent many compliments to you all. The only person who was new to me was Mr. Potter, the learned and elegant translator of Æschylus. He is a very amiable and modest man. He showed me a letter from the Chancellor, appointing him unasked, to a

desirable piece of preferment. He never saw him, but thought his literary merit entitled him to be taken notice of. Poor man, he is all gratitude, for he has had many troubles. Were you not pleased to see that Mr. Pitt has kept his promise to his friend Wilberforce, and introduced the slave business?

I passed a quiet evening at Mrs. Dickenson's, with only Lord Stormont, whom Lord Monboddo told me is the most learned nobleman we have. He was very informing with respect to many facts that occurred during his embassy at Paris. He tells me that Madame de Sevigné's letters are going into disrepute; I am sorry that good taste is so much on the decline. I am reading my friend Mr. Bowdler's account of the Revolution in Holland; like everything that comes from that family, it is full of truth and good sense.

To the same.

London, May 22, 1788.

I have been pleasantly engaged for a week past during this fine weather, in going almost every day to some pleasant villa of different friends. Tuesday I dined at Strawberry Hill, a pleasant day, and a good little party. The next day we went to a sweet place which Mr. Montagu has bought on Shooter's Hill. Another day I went to Richmond with Mrs. Boscawen, and came home in the evening to a *Thé* at Mrs. Montagu's. Perhaps you do not know that a *Thé* is among the stupid new follies

of the winter. You are to invite fifty or a hundred people to come at eight o'clock: there is to be a long table, or little parties at small ones; the cloth is to be laid, as at breakfast; every one has a napkin;—tea and coffee are made by the company, as at a public breakfast; the table is covered with rolls, wafers, bread and butter; and what constitutes the very essence of a *Thé*, an immense load of hot buttered rolls, and muffins, all admirably contrived to create a nausea in persons fresh from the dinner table. Now, of all nations under the sun, as I take it, the English are the greatest fools:—because the Duke of Dorset in Paris, where people dine at two, thought this would be a pretty fashion to introduce; we, who dine at six, must adopt this French translation of an English fashion, and fall into it, as if it were an original invention: taking up our own custom at third hand. This will be a short folly.

Among my country excursions I must not omit dining with Mrs. Trimmer and her twelve children at Brentford—a scene, too, of instruction and delight. The other day I was at Mr. Langton's; our subject was Abolition; we fell to it with great eagerness, and paid no attention to the wits who were round us, though there were two who were new to me,—Mr. Malone, the critic of Shakspeare, and Dr. Gillies, author of the new history of Greece. I go to Mrs. Bouverie's, at Teston, for a fortnight, and then to Fulham Palace for another fortnight, and then to my own dear cottage.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. John Newton.

Cowslip Green, July 23, 1788.

MY DEAR SIR,

I rejoice that you and Mrs. Newton are in possession of the pure delight of retirement, rural scenery, health, and friendly society, the best natural blessings of human life. 'God made the country, and man made the town,' says the delightfully enthusiastic bard you are so near,—a sentence to which my heart always makes an involuntary warm response. I have been now some weeks in the quiet enjoyment of my beloved solitude, and the world is wiped out of my memory, as with the sponge of oblivion. But as I have observed to you before, so much do my gardening cares and pleasures occupy me, that the world is not half so formidable a rival to heaven in my heart, as my garden.

I trifle away more time than I ought, under pretence, (for I must have a creditable motive to impose even upon myself,) that it is good for my health; but in reality, because it promises a sort of indolent pleasure, and keeps me from thinking and finding out what is amiss in myself. The world, though I live in the gay part of it, I do not actually much love; yet friendship and kindness have contributed to fix me there, and I dearly love many individuals in it. When I am in the great world, I consider myself as in an enemy's country and as

beset with snares, and this puts me upon my guard. I know that many people whom I hear say a thousand brilliant and agreeable things, disbelieve or at least disregard those truths on which I found my everlasting hopes. This sets me upon a more diligent inquiry into those truths; and "upon the arch of Christianity, the more I press, the stronger I find it." Fears and snares seem necessary to excite my circumspection; for it is certain that my mind has more languor, and my faith less energy here, where I have no temptations from without, and where I live in the full enjoyment and constant perusal of the most beautiful objects of inanimate nature,—the lovely wonders of the munificence and bounty of God. Yet, in the midst of his blessings I should be still more tempted to forget him, were it not for the frequent nervous headaches and low fevers, which I find to be wonderfully wholesome for my moral health. I feel grateful, dear Sir, for your kind anxiety for my best interests. My situation is, as you rightly apprehend, full of danger; yet less from the pleasures than from the deceitful favour and the insinuating applause of the world. The goodness of God will, I humbly trust, preserve me from taking up with so poor a portion: nay, I hope that what he has given me, is to shew that all is nothing, short of himself; yet there are times when I am apt to think it a great deal, and to forget him who has promised to be my portion for ever.

I am delighted, as you rightly conjectured, with the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' I forget my dislike to

allegory, while I read the spiritual vagaries of his fruitful imagination,

Yours, dear Sir,
most faithfully,
H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Cowslip Green, Sept, 1788.

'*Heureux le peuple dont l'histoire ennuie,*' says somebody. The best times to live in are often the worst to write about. In a novel or a comedy, the moment the lovers are settled and happy they become so insipid that another page of the one, or an additional scene of the other, would be quite surfeiting. If any body were to write a play about good sort of quiet, reasonable, orderly, prosperous people, the audience would not be able to sit out the first act; they would long for the relief of a little distress, and languish for the refreshment of a little misery. I do almost think the Tyburn Chronicle a more interesting book than Sydney's Arcadia; for however cheap one may hold the morals of the heroes of the former work, it exhibits a delineation of the same strong passions which actuated 'Macedonia's Madman and the Swede,' and furnishes out the terrible catastrophes to tragedies, only operating with a difference of education, circumstance, and opportunity. All this verbiage means to say that I have, during the whole summer, kept the "even tenour of my way," with such sober and quiet uniformity, that the history of my adven-

tures would make as dull a novel as could be had at a circulating library, and that is saying a great deal. I do not however *complain;* I have lived much to my own taste, and have enjoyed some of the best blessings of human life; tolerable health, 'retired leisure,' beautiful rural scenery, a garden full of roses, and books, if I had industry to read them. Apropos of the latter, I was in imminent danger of waiting till winter for Gibbon's last volumes, as I never think of *buying* a book till it is shrunk to much smaller dimensions than the corpulent quarto; but by the greatest good luck in the world, I have a neighbour who reads; so that I have almost waded through that mass of impiety and bad taste. I protest I think that if this work were to become the standard of style and religion, Christianity and the English language would decay pretty nearly together; and the same period would witness the downfall of sound principles and of true taste. I have seldom met with more affectation, or less perspicuity. The instances of false English are many; and of false taste endless. I find little of the sober dignity of history; and the notes are as immodest (even without my being able to read Greek) as they are profane. In numberless passages he is so obscure, that the fashionable phrase of the *luminous* pages of Gibbon seems to be as diametrically opposite to the truth as Bishop Sprat's éloge on Cowley's learning, which he quaintly said, was *enamelled* and not *embossed;* and which seems to me (who *doat* on Cowley in other views) to be directly contrary to the fact, for his learning, in

his poetry at least, is not only too prominent, and in too obvious relief, but is what the embroiderers call appliquée: and very often the plain web of his sense would be beautiful, if it were not spoiled by the tinsel and spangles which he tacks on to it. Among a thousand other proofs of Gibbon's want of clearness, pray turn, if you have the book at hand, to the story (page 310, vol. V.) which gave rise to Hughes's charming play of the Siege of Damascus. I have read it three times, and were not the tragedy fresh in my memory, I should be at a loss to understand the story. That you may not think, by all this criticism, that I am blinded by prejudice, I will own that *par ci et par la,* I have been well amused, particularly with Justinian, Belisarius, and the accounts of the pastoral nations. I think he has made but little of Mahomet, considering the real greatness of the subject, and its peculiar suitableness to his own gorgeous pen and sensual temper.

I beg your pardon for running on thus, instead of telling you how much I was gratified with your letter; the more so, as it was a volunteer, and came without dun or flapper from me. I suppose one likes a first letter better than a reply, from the same odd principle in nature which makes one prefer a present before a debt, or a favour before a duty; one is apt to put it down to the merit side of the account, and self-love makes one believe that it arises from sheer regard, without any deductions on the score of necessity, obligation, or compulsion. I am glad you are so delightfully situated. But

why always an Island? last year the Isle of *Wight;* now the Isle of *Thanet.* Of all the birds in the air, I should have least suspected *you* of this insular taste. You who so delight to build among the singing birds, seem to have flown from their society: but your own nest now begins to produce company and harmony enough. I am glad William tastes Spenser; I was afraid he would have grown wise and philosophical; but you give me hope now that he will keenly relish the charming illusions of poetry; and I hope that while he will form the justest and soundest notions of the world that *is,* he will derive a thousand pathetic and pensive delights from the world that is *not.* Can I talk of the delights of song, and neglect to tell you that I have had the company of Dr. Warton at Clifton for some time? And we talked of poetry and criticism from morn till night. The delightful enthusiast has lost nothing of his fine spirits. I would you had been with us.

I am going to leave my beloved solitude, to pay a visit to Mrs. Montagu, who has her nephew and niece, and the new babe with her. I shall stay near a fortnight. Mrs. Garrick is to give me the meeting.

You have of course heard that a mine of literary wealth is said to have been found in some old castle, —a great bundle of letters of Madame de Sevigné: Mr. Walpole's faith, however, is but weak—nor is mine strong; these constant forgeries make even the credulous sceptical. I could but smile at your alluding so gravely to what you supposed me to be employed about: I assure you gravely, and in

sober truth, that this rambling letter is by much the longest, the most serious, and most considerable composition I have attempted this summer. Nay, so far am I from having written a page or a line of any thing new, that I have actually let an old thing, which has not been unsuccessful, lie out of print almost a twelvemonth, because I cannot bring myself to sit down to look over and correct, merely the errors of the press. I find sloth the besetting sin of solitude. But is it not as well *ne rien faire*, as *faire des riens?*

Many thanks for your kind offer about Louisa. I shall have no need of your bounty on this occasion, for a reason which I have not left myself paper enough to explain. As she is grown quite stupid and hopeless, it will be best to get her settled in an hospital; which I am doing. It is well you have a whole island to yourself; or you could never find time to read such an immeasurable letter. It is well too, you don't get them often. My kindest regards to Mrs. Pepys. I rejoice she has so pleasant a window to look out at: it seems but a small thing, but it makes half the pleasure of my life; *my* pleasant window I mean.

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 1788.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Though my last letter was actually written before I was indulged with your's, yet my conscience has not been quite at rest at the two or three shabby disingenuous lines I foisted in afterwards. This is my full and true confession; I wished sincerely to try if it were not possible for me to escape detection—I therefore resolved not to name my design, nor shew the MS. to any one, and but one human being knew of it. Another reason for not communicating it even to such a confidential, and wise, and tried friend as yourself, my dear Madam, was to save you the necessity of either confessing what would have betrayed the secret, or denying what you knew to be true—a sacrifice of your principles which I no more dared require, than you would have been willing to make; so in full confidence of never being found out, I stole abroad. I had many reasons for wishing to be unknown, not *all* so base as the prevailing one of fear: I was conscious that I did not live up to my song, in the first place; in the second, I was seriously persuaded that my insignificant name could not add weight or strength to the book, but might *diminish* it; and I thought the chances were, that while the author remained a secret, the 'Manners of the Great' might be supposed to be the work of some wiser and better person than a discovery would prove it to be. With

all these sage thoughts in my head, judge of my confusion the first three days, to receive about half a dozen letters of kind congratulation from my detectors. I have never answered any of them, for what could I say? I am, however, really sorry for it. I thought it a master stroke of policy not to send either Mrs. Garrick or you a copy, as it would, I fancied, be conceived impossible that, had it been mine, that could have been omitted.

My dear Madam, I truly think that you must be among the very few to whom this bold little book will not give offence. Pray write to me *sans menagement* what they (I mean those to whom it is addressed,) say of it, for I know nothing here, only Cadell sends me word another new edition is wanted. Your kind letter, as also that to the Bishop of London, which he sent me, quite penetrated me; and will counterbalance much severe judgment, which I must, and do expect from others. Do you know, my dear Madam, as I have said before, I feel a little awkward about this same book. I am so afraid that strangers will think me good! and there is a degree of hypocrisy in appearing so much better than one is. I cannot help applying to myself what Prior makes Solomon say in his idolatrous state, 'They brought my Proverbs to confute my life.'

I should the more regret this long exile from my good friends, but that I hope the flutter of the book will be quite over by the time I make my appearance among you. My dear Madam, be *candid* as well as kind, and frankly tell me all the

criticisms you hear upon it. I don't wish to hear them merely that I may be humbled, but that I may be mended; as I shall, I hope, always, 'be proud to learn of able men,' and shall thankfully correct every error they may point out; my request includes able *women* also.

I hope you will have met your dear Duchess and her fine family all well. I congratulate you on their arrival, as in their absence something must be always wanting to your happiness. You have whetted my desires after Mr. Warton, but I will keep that delicious morsel untouched for London, as I am at present hampered in a great deal of less pleasant reading. Mr. Gibbon's pompous but very informing history of a dull period, I think I never shall get through; I sit down to it with disgust, and rise unentertained; I had almost said, enraged. With what malignant delight does he dwell on the first corruptions of the church, and how does he enjoy the failings of the Fathers, of which, truth to speak, there is a plentiful crop. He does not, as in the first volume, stab openly with the broad sabre of Infidelity; yet, where he finds a sore place, instead of mollifying it with ointment, how does he delight to pour over it cold Aconite and deadly Hellebore!—but how I run on upon what you know so much better.

My dear Madam,

Your's most faithfully,

H. More.

CHAPTER IV.

At the beginning of the year 1789, we meet with the following letters from Miss More to her Sister:

Hampton, Jan. 6, 1789.

We came to Hampton on Friday. It was so dismally cold, I should not have been sorry to have stayed in town, if I could have remained peaceably at home. We went on new year's day to dinner at Mrs. Montagu's, where we were twelve, all men except myself and Mrs. Boscawen. The next day, to my great satisfaction, we came to our solitude. The first amusing business that Cadell put into my hands, was to correct the seventh edition of '*Manners.*' Instead of being thankful as I ought, I was rather provoked at such a disagreeable job. All the private accounts of the king are still better than the public ones. They say he talks to Willis of his complaint, and of the best method of treating it. He spoke with great calmness and soundness of mind of the King of Spain's death, and said, 'I cannot be such an hypocrite as to pretend to be sorry, for he was never a friend to me or to this country.'

As to Pitt, if I were a Pagan, I would raise altars and temples to him, but I rejoice with trembling: he has reached the summit of human glory, and is not that summit a very slippery point? The death of the speaker is an awful event at such a moment. Both parties were equally accusing him of designing to hurt their cause by a feigned illness. It reminds one of Burke's remark on the candidate who died during the Bristol election. 'What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!'

Hampton, Jan. 1789.

We have passed the whole time since my last in complete solitude, except that Mrs. Kennicott spent a few days with us. Poor Dr. Adams! how short the time since I was at Pembroke College with him and Mrs. Adams, Dr. Xenophon Edwards, Johnson, and Henderson, not one of whom are now alive. *I* have been spared; *they* have been taken; let me adore the long-suffering of God, who has given me so long a space for repentance.

Does not Pitt fight like a hero for the poor Queen? but who will fight for *him*, for he has not a hundred a year in the world? Like an honest old house-steward going to be turned off, he is anxious to put every thing in order, and leave the house in such condition, that the next servants may do as little mischief as possible. How unkindly the opposition treated Wilberforce! but he is not only of a very different spirit, but is a match for them at their own weapons—eloquence, of which few men have more; and wit, of which he has as much as if he had no

piety. Mrs. Boscawen writes me word, that politics were never carried so high in private conversation; it is quite disgusting; more virulence was never known. The poor king, the other night, after Dr. Willis had read prayers to him, prayed aloud for himself. On the 17th he said to the page, 'Remember that to-morrow is the queen's birth-day, and I insist upon having a new coat.' As for Pitt, he goes on triumphantly. Excellent accounts of the king to-day; private accounts too, better than have yet been circulated.

From the same to the same.

London, Feb. 16, 1789.

Poor Mrs. Handcock, Mrs. Vesey's dear friend and companion, is dead. It is melancholy to look at that house, where I have seen so many ingenious people, and heard so much pleasant conversation, and made so many friendships, and to think that of its two mistresses, whose faces were never turned towards me but with kindness, who never received me without affection, or parted from me without regret,—one is a corpse, and the other bereft of her faculties; what a call for serious reflection! I want to find my heart more affected with feeling for the sorrows of others, and with gratitude for my own mercies! I am just summoned down to the Montagus, who have called to welcome our arrival. Mrs. Garrick is gone to-night to a private subscription concert, known by the name of the Ladies concert; a very sober amusement, and the only one at which

my Lords the Bishops appear. Having spent last evening with Sir Lucas Pepys, who was just come from Kew, I have the great satisfaction of confirming all the good intelligence you receive from the papers. I had also the same fresh from Sir George Baker; and even Dr. Warren confesses that his royal patient is recovering. I believe he is the first person whose character was ever raised by the loss of his reason; but almost every thing that escapes him, has either good nature or humanity or piety in it. The following specimen has good sense too. Walking in the garden, (which he does to the extent of seven or eight miles a day) with Dr. Willis, the latter descried two or three of the workmen, and ordered them to withdraw; 'Willis, (said the king) you do not know your own business, let the men come back again; you ought to accustom me to see people by degrees, that I may be prepared for seeing them more at large.' Mrs. Boscawen's house joins Kew Gardens: seeing the workmen had made a fire to burn rubbish, he said, 'Pray put out that fire directly, don't you see it smokes Mrs. Boscawen's house.'

In the midst of all these cares and distractions, a friend of mine called on Pitt the other night. He found him alone, gay and cheerful, his mind totally disengaged from the scenes in which he had passed the day. He was reading Milton aloud with great emphasis, and he said his mind was so totally engaged in paradise, that he had forgotten there were any people in the world but Adam and Eve. This seems a trifle, but it is an indication of a great

mind, so entirely to discharge itself of such a load of care, and to find pleasure in so innocent and sublime an amusement.

And so the geraniums are gone. Mrs. Barrington, to whom I communicated this calamity, and who is a deep botanist, says, she much questions if they are actually dead; to be sure it is a grievous loss. A few days since we had a most magnificent dinner at my Lord Amherst's; I love him, because of his faithful attachment to the king. The bishop of London has sent me his pamphlet on the '*Transfiguration*;' it is very ingenious.

From the same to the same.

London, Feb. 25, 1789.

I should certainly have written you a line on that blessed Thursday, when the chancellor made the memorable communication of the king's being convalescent, but the post was gone. I was out at dinner, and we were talking on what would probably be the event of things, when lo! a violent rap at the door, and Lord Mount Edgecombe was announced. He came in almost breathless, directly from the House of Lords, and told us that the king was recovered. We were quite transported, and Mrs. Garrick fairly got up and kissed him before the company. Soon afterwards arrived the Duke of Beaufort, confirming the news.

Yesterday I was at dinner at the Bishop of Salisbury's, who had been at Kew in the morning, and found all prosperous. Hear a diverting instance

of the prejudice of party. Mr. Erskine gravely affirmed the other day, that Pitt was no orator; that his genius wanted that particular faculty which constitutes eloquence. The Bishop of London defended Mr. Pitt most ably, and forced the other to make such concessions, that we thought a great orator might be well made up out of what even *he* allowed him to possess. Erskine was very entertaining, and not quite so overbearing as he sometimes is. I have been to pay the wedding compliments to Lord and Lady Bathurst, as Lord Apsley was married the day before yesterday, to a niece of the Duke of Richmond's, very pretty, very accomplished, and very amiable. Mrs. Garrick sends her love.

From the same to the same.

London, March 9, 1789.

A day or two ago, I had a note from the Bishop of London, saying, I must dine at his house on that day, for he had engaged a gentleman to meet me. I was much puzzled who it could be, and who should appear but Dr. Willis; the good-natured bishop kindly foreseeing it would be delightful to me. He is the very image of simplicity; quite a good, plain, old-fashioned country parson; he is seventy-three. As we had nobody else at dinner, except the Master of the Rolls,[1] I was indulged in asking the Doctor all manner of impertinent questions, which I did to the amount of about nine

[1] Sir Pepper Arden.

hundred, and which he was much pleased to answer. He never saw, he said, so much natural sweetness and goodness of mind, united to so much piety, as in the King. During his illness he many times shed tears for Lord North's blindness. The Bishop of London had been to the King that morning: he was in a very devout frame of mind, which his enemies will say is the surest sign he is still deranged. He told the Bishop, that 'at the worst, his trust in God had never forsaken him; that *that* confidence alone had been his support.' He added, 'that he wished to return his thanks to Almighty God in the most public manner, and hoped the Bishop would not refuse him a sermon.' He proposed going to St. Paul's to do it. It was a grand idea, and I think it will be one of the most awful scenes since the opening of Solomon's temple; but they dissuade him very much from it; thinking that the concourse and joy of the people would be too much for his feelings. He himself has named one of the Psalms for the thanksgiving day, and the 12th of Isaiah for the lesson.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

That unprincely vagabond Queen Christina, said of the learned Vossius, 'that he not only knew from whence words came, but whither they were going.' The last half of this knowledge is all that is claimed by the writer of the enclosed jargon. It is an attempt, from the bon-ton gabble of the present age, to anticipate the general style of the

next. This pert censor has not the presumption to quarrel with the naturalizing of foreign *words*, the discreet adoption of which adds opulence and ornament to our language; but (as she loves to sin in the very act of censure, and as the greatest rogue always turns king's evidence) she laments the peregrinity of *style*, the foreign fabrication of *sentences*, which is wearing away the beauty. diluting the spirit, and diminishing the force of our tongue. The courtly ease of the style of Addison, the sinewy force and clear precision of Swift, and the elegant vigour of a work well-known to, but not duly appreciated by Mr. Walpole, called the Castle of Otranto, are untainted with this spreading corruption, and exhibit models of good taste in their several species of composition.

In the inclosed nonsense, though there is not one French *word*, there is not one English *idiom*. I confess I have been guilty of the most malicious exaggeration, but I was forced to allow for the increasing degeneracy of fifty years, in which period I suppose our style may have reached the acmé of defect, the perfection of abomination; for I am willing to hope that all the artillery of affectation and false taste continually battering it, will not be able, in less time, completely to demolish so noble a structure as the English language.

I feel so much ashamed of the nonsense I have written, that I dare not add a name which would disgrace my best title—that of Mr. Walpole's

most obedient, and much obliged,

humble servant.

P. S.—Taste is of all ages, and truth is eternal; and there is a truth in taste almost as demonstrable as any mathematical proposition.

A specimen of the English language, as it will probably be written and spoken in the next century; in a letter from a lady to her friend, in the reign of George the Fifth.

Alamode Castle, June 20, 1840.

DEAR MADAM,

I no sooner found myself here than I visited my new apartment, which is composed of five pieces; the small room which gives upon the garden is practised through the great one, and there is no other issue. As I was quite exceeded with fatigue, I had no sooner made my toilette, than I let myself fall on a bed of repose, where sleep came to surprise me.

My lord and I are in the intention to make good cheer, and a great expense, and this country is in possession to furnish wherewithal to amuse oneself. All that England has of illustrious, all that youth has of amiable, or beauty of ravishing, sees itself in this quarter. Render yourself here then, my friend, and you shall find assembled all that there is of best, whether for letters, whether for birth.

Yesterday I did my possible to give to eat; the dinner was of the last perfection, and the wines left nothing to desire. The repast was seasoned with a thousand rejoicing sallies, full of salt and agreement, and one more brilliant than another. Lady Frances

charmed me as for the first time; she is made to paint, has a great air, and has infinitely of expression in her physiognomy; her manners have as much of natural, as her figure has of interesting.

I had prayed Lady B. to be of this dinner, as I had heard nothing but good of her: but I am now disabused on her subject; she is past her first youth, has very little instruction, is inconsequent and subject to caution; but having evaded with one of her pretenders, her reputation has been committed by the bad faith of a friend, on whose fidelity she reposed herself; she is therefore fallen into devotion, goes no more to spectacles, and play is defended at her house. Though she affects a mortal serious, I observed that her eyes were of intelligence with those of Sir James, near whom I had taken care to plant myself, though this is always a sacrifice which costs. Sir James is a great sayer of nothings; it is a spoilt mind; full of fatuity and pretension: his conversation is a tissue of impertinences, and the bad tone which reigns at present has put the last hand to his defects. He makes but little case of his word, but as he lends himself to whatever is proposed of amusing, the women all throw themselves at his head. Adieu.

From H. More to her sister.

London, April 1789.

I did fully intend writing a line on Wednesday, to have told you of the glorious and most promising opening of the great cause of the Abolition in the

House of Commons, but I could not find one moment's leisure, we had so much meeting, writing, and congratulation. The Bishop of London fully intended to be the first to apprise me of this most interesting intelligence, and accordingly got up so early as to write me a note at seven in the morning; but Lady Middleton forestalled him by writing on Monday at midnight. Pitt and Fox united can do much; 'the Douglas and the Percy both together, are confident against a world in arms.' The moment I finished my last, Lord Amherst came himself to fetch me to dinner, and there was no such thing as making *gold stick* wait, so I was obliged to break up my little chat with Mr. Raikes rather suddenly, who had called upon me a few minutes before. In the evening Mrs. Bates sung all her finest things most exquisitely. It was a very high treat. The constitutional ball for the king's recovery turned out the best and pleasantest thing of the kind ever known. All was loyalty and joy; and for once, magnificence did not murder cheerfulness. Old Willis supped at a little table with Pitt and two or three others; and was almost worshipped. To-morrow we go out of town for a week, to live among the lilacs. How I shall enjoy both the lilacs and the leisure!

From the same to the same.

London, 1789.

I do not send you an account of the procession to St. Paul's, as you have seen it in the papers. The

poor soldiers were on guard from three in the morning. I would willingly relinquish all the sights I may see this twelvemonth, to have known they had each some cold meat and a pot of porter. I was troubled too about the six thousand charity children, but the Bishop assures me they had each of them a roll and two apples. I was very much affected at the sight of the king. The mob was very joyful, but rather too temperate in their acclamations, which is said to have proceeded from a fear of overpowering the king's feelings. It was singular enough that the king should issue a proclamation, commanding everybody to go to church, and then exhibit a procession, to put it absolutely out of every one's power. I believe I could have got to the planet Jupiter as easily as to a church.

The king of France has written so very kindly to the king on his recovery, and behaved so handsomely, that the queen and princesses are to be at the French Ambassador's Gala; an honour never before paid to anybody. I now begin to think there has been quite enough of singing, and dancing, and illuminating, and eating, and drinking on this joyful occasion, and cannot help thinking with the Lady in Comus, that we 'praise God amiss.' I begin to want to see this very important blessing recorded by some public act of pious munificence and charity.

It is sometimes diverting, though sad, to see how party triumphs over probity. I was on Saturday at a very great dinner at Lord Somers's, and could find out the party principles of each one of the company, only by his saying how the king looked, and what

degree of attention he gave to the service. I went to a private concert at Lord Exeter's; Mrs. Bates sung; I was much pleased. I must not forget to say that the most caressed person at this assembly was Dr. Willis, whose rosy face looked *so* happy. Mr. Wilberforce and the whole junto of Abolitionists are still locked up at Teston; they are up *slaving* till two o'clock every morning, and I think Mrs. Bouverie told me they had walked out but once in the three weeks they had been there. While I was at Sir C. Middleton's the other night, in came a copy of the Evidence before the Privy Council, just printed; it was the thickest folio I ever saw! Well might the Commons desire a week's suspension of the business to read it. I have invited myself to Mrs. Montagu's May-day Saturnalia,[1] next year, unless I should be engaged by that time to dine with a party of free *negroes*. I have a little book sent me from Paris, a very eloquent and ingenious éloge on Rousseau, by Mr. Necker's daughter, Madame de Stäel. I was much acquainted with the Neckers when they were in England, but their daughter was not then *come out*.

From the same to the same.

London, March 17, 1789.

The Queen and Princesses came to see the illumination, and did not get back to Kew till after

[1] Mrs. Montagu always gave an annual dinner of roast beef and plum-pudding to the chimney-sweepers on May-day, in the court before her house, Portman Square.

one o'clock. When the coach stopped, the Queen took notice of a fine gentleman who came to the coach-door without a hat. 'This was the King, who came to hand her out. She scolded him for being up, and out so late; but he gallantly replied, 'he could not possibly go to bed and sleep till he knew she was safe.' There never was so joyous, so innocent, and orderly a mob. I was very sorry I could not go, as invited, to Lady Cremorne's, to see *her* way of celebrating the festivity. She had two hundred Sunday-school children, thirty-six of whom she clothed for the occasion; they walked in procession to the church; after service they walked back to her house, where, after singing a Psalm of praise, and God save the King, they had a fine dinner of roast beef and plumb-pudding. Then the whole two hundred marched off with baskets under their arms, full of good things for their parents. I spent an evening lately with this charming lady.

From the same to the same.

London, May, 1789.

Mr. Wilberforce and his myrmidons are still shut up at Mrs. Bouverie's, at Teston, to write; I tell them I hope Teston will be the Runnymede of the negroes, and that the great charter of African liberty will be there completed. It is well that Fulham is so near, so that the Bishop will be within reach to forward the work. The fate of Africa now trembles in the balance. On Friday I gratified the curiosity of many years, by meeting at dinner Ma-

dame la Chevaliere D'Eon; she is extremely entertaining, has universal information, wit, vivacity, and gaiety. Something too much of the latter (I have heard,) when she has taken a bottle or two of Burgundy; but this being a very sober party, she was kept entirely within the limits of decorum. General Johnson was of the party, and it was ridiculous to hear her military conversation. Sometimes it was, *Quand j'étois Colonel d'un tel regiment*; then again, *Non c'étois quand j'étois secrétaire d'Ambassade du Duc de Nivernois*; or *Quand je négociois la paix de Paris*. She is, to be sure, a phenomenon in history, and as such, a great curiosity. But *one* D'Eon is enough, and *one slice of her quite sufficient*.

I am expected at Rosedale,[1] at Teston, and at the Bishop of London's, but have given no definitive answer, because I do not think I can contrive to see them all. I fear there will be great opposition to the Abolition in the Lords. I dined with a party of peers at Lord Ossory's, and there was not one friend to that humane bill. I sat two hours in the evening with Mr. Walpole, who had a pleasant little party. Among others, Frederick North, a very agreeable and accomplished young man: so learned, so pleasant, and with so fine a taste! To-night I go to a little supper at Mrs. Damer's, and to-morrow I take my leave of the pomps and vanities of this town, and go to Fulham Palace. I shall stay a week with the Bishop, from thence I shall

[1] Mrs Boscawen's Villa at Richmond.

go, if possible, for a few days to Mrs. Boscawen, and from thence to Teston.

From the same to the same.

Fulham, June 4, 1789.

On Sunday, we breakfasted at half-past seven, and went to London to hear the Bishop at St. Paul's, where he preached and administered the sacrament. In that great space, his clear voice sounded as loud and distinct as in his own pretty little chapel, where he again performed the service in the afternoon; so you see he does not think his dignity gives him a privilege to be idle. I left the sweet and amiable society at the palace with regret. The Bishop desired a great many compliments to you, and is determined to come to Cowslip Green. The Bishop of Salisbury and Mrs. Barrington were with us a little, and I had hard work to fight off their kind invitation to Mongewell; the present plan is for me to stay here till Tuesday.

Wednesday evening,—I close this letter from Mrs. Boscawen's at Rosedale, sitting in the very seat where Thompson wrote the Seasons.

In the month of June, Hannah More was again settled for some time at Cowslip Green, except a visit she seems to have paid to Salisbury Palace, and during this interval the following correspondence took place.

Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Cowslip Green, 1789.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I am sure you have thought me a *perfidy* woman to have heard nothing from me through all these long summer days, if such a cold and drenching June and July can have the face to call themselves summer; but my time has been so totally and sadly occupied since I came to my hermitage, that I have scarcely written to a friend, though my dear Mrs. Carter is in the small but beloved number of those of whom I have frequently and affectionately thought. Perhaps you know that Mrs. Montagu had the kindness to bring me down hither herself from Bristol, and bestowed on me a day which will be ranked among the pleasantest I have passed here. I have had many cheerful pleasant letters from Mr. Walpole, which prove him to be in charming spirits. You owe the handsome form in which the enclosed nonsense makes its appearance to a galanterie of his. While I was at the dear Bishop's at Fulham, the trifling incident recorded in the argument happened. The Bishop cut a little walk through a dark thicket, to which I gave the name of the Monk's walk, and the subject obviously enough suggested the idea of the verses, which Mr. Walpole, by accident seeing, very much wished to print at Strawberry Hill; a compliment too flattering for my vanity to resist; so he printed a certain number of copies for his friends and mine. I wish

I could contrive to send you more than one, though perhaps you will say with Shakspeare, 'a little more than a little is by much too much.'

I have almost got to the end of Gibbon. I had no other way of coming at the history of the Bas Empire, but by wading through that offensive and exceptionable book. I do not know whether he takes most pains to corrupt the principles or to pervert the taste of his reader. Were he to be the prevailing author, Christianity and the English language would be abolished pretty nearly at the same time; there is almost as much affectation and false taste, as there is impiety and even obscenity. Luckily I cannot read Greek, but those who do assure me that many of the notes are grossly indecent: I am sure that is the case with many of those which I *can* read. I have promised to go for a week to Mrs. Montagu's about the middle of this month. Mrs. Kennicott spent nearly a fortnight at my little cottage, and accommodated herself very readily to the quiet simple life she was obliged to lead. My sisters spent their week of leisure with me. I am now a perfect hermit, enjoying complete solitude, with such casual interruptions as make a grateful vicissitude. The world is wiped out of my memory as totally as if it had never occupied me; but the remembrance of a few wise, and good, and pleasant friends lives in my heart, accompanies my walks, and embellishes my solitude. Be assured that my dear Mrs. Carter is among the very first of these, and is tenderly and constantly remembered by

her ever faithful, H. More.

From the same to the same.

Palace, Salisbury, October 1, 1789.

MY DEAR MRS. CARTER,

I do insist upon it, that punctuality of correspondence must never be made the test of affection, for no two things ever bore less proportion to each other than the sincerity of my love, and the frequency of my letters to you. It is lucky for the peace of my conscience that I have not your last kind letter by me to reproach me by its date. But I have led a sad vagrant sort of life lately, and vagabondism is not very compatible with regularity of any sort. In the first place I took a ramble with my excellent and pleasant friends Mr. and Miss Wilberforce (after they had bestowed some time on me at my cottage) through Monmouthshire; and we sailed down the pleasant and picturesque river Wye, enjoying at once the benefits of improving conversation, and the charms of the most beautiful and interesting scenery. We deplored the ruthless hand of war, which had dismantled castles; and we contemplated abbeys, which the mouldering hand of time would have mellowed into more affecting beauty had the zeal of reformation confined itself to opinions and principles, and not vented its undistinguishing fury on stone walls and pillars and windows. Your own charming verses on a similar subject leave nothing to be said, as they are tender and beautiful in a high degree.

Of the ten days I staid at Sandleford, five were

devoted to most unrelenting headaches; and the intervening five, instead of being employed to redeem the inaction of the others, were past in pleasant airings, &c. I left Mrs. Montagu quite well.

I am at present on a visit to our excellent friends the Bishop of Salisbury and Mrs. Barrington: Mrs. Garrick is of the party. She made a visit to my cottage from her head quarters at Bath, where she has been some time drinking the waters, not having been quite well this summer. I should be charged with the kindest remembrances of our whole society, did they know I was writing to you, but they are all gone to an oratorio. I declined going, as I have long since given up public places, which neither suit my taste nor my health.

My *whole* time, however, has not been devoted to such idle pursuits as travelling and visiting. I am engaged in a work in which I am sure I shall have your hearty prayers and good wishes. You will I dare say mistake the word *work*, and think it is some literary vanity; but no, *le voici*. A friend of mine and myself having with great concern discovered a very large village, at many miles distance from me, containing incredible multitudes of poor, plunged in an excess of vice, poverty, and ignorance beyond what one would suppose possible in a civilized and Christian country, have undertaken the task of seeing if we cannot become humble instruments of usefulness to these poor creatures, in the way of schools, and a little sort of manufactory. The difficulties are great, and my hopes not sanguine; but *He* who does not "despise the day of

small things," will, I trust, bless this project. I am going down, very shortly, to my little colony, to see what can be done before winter sets in. My long absence at that period will be a grievous circumstance.

I know your good and benevolent heart will receive pleasure at hearing that my sisters are preparing to retire at Christmas from their anxious and laborious employment, to enjoy, I hope, a little leisure and peace after a busy, and I trust, not unuseful life. Adieu, my dearest Mrs. Carter, God bless you. Always your very faithful and sincerely obliged,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 1789.

My dear Sir,

I do aver, (and a modest asseveration it is,) that I am much more amiable, and worthy, and grateful than I appear to be,—I mean in the single article, of friendship; and though I do not pretend to have *quite* reached sinless perfection even in that article, yet are my delinquencies on that head more involuntary than on any other. Besides, the *abolition* of such a gainful traffic as our correspondence is to me, where, as Lord North says, *the reciprocity is all on one side*, would be such a loss to me, as no other literary merchandise I can engage in, could possibly repair. Yet though it is so much my interest as well as my pleasure to be good, it is certain that nothing can be much worse than I

appear to be; but I have lately had so much business on my hands, (not writing, believe me!) that I think I have not written a single line for mere pleasure or friendship these six weeks. Your project for relieving our poor slaves by machine work, is so far from being wild or chimerical, that of three persons deep and able in the concern, (Mr. Wilberforce among others,) not one but has thought it rational and practicable; and that a plough may be so constructed as to save much misery. But I forget that negroes are not human, nor our fellow-creatures; allowing, however, the popular position that they are *not*, still a feeling master would be glad to save his ox or his ass superfluous labour, and unnecessary fatigue. I am grieved to find by a letter from Mrs. Boscawen (for I should never have learned it from yourself) that you have had another attack of the gout. I found a little alleviation of this unpleasant intelligence, in comforting myself that your two fair wives were within reach of your elbow chair, and that their pleasant society would somewhat mitigate the sufferings of your confinement. Apropos of two wives—when the newspapers the other day were pleased to marry me to Dr. Priestley, I am surprised they did not rather choose to bestow me on Mr. M——, as *his* wife is probably better broken in to these eastern usages, than Mrs. Priestley may be. I can account for this absurd report I think. Being one day in a large company, who all inveighed against Lindsey, and Jebb, and other Socinians who had deserted the church, because they could not subscribe to the

articles, I happened to say that I thought sincerity such a golden virtue, that I had a feeling bordering on respect for such as had apostatized upon principle; for when a man gives such an unequivocal proof of his being in earnest, as to renounce a lucrative profession, rather than violate his conscience, I must think him sincere, and of course respectable. I have ever since been accused of rank Socinianism, and the papers soon after married me to Priestley, though I reprobate his opinions. I never saw him but once in my life, and he had then been married above twenty years.

I am edified by your strictures on the French distractions. These people seem to be tending to the only two deeper evils, than those in which they are at present involved; for I can figure to myself no greater mischiefs than despotism and popery, except anarchy and atheism. I could find in my heart to forgive Louis Quatorze all the spite I owe him, if he could know that the throne of the grand monarque has been overturned by fishwomen! What a pity too that Vertot is not alive! whose element was a state convulsion; who hopped over peaceful intervals, as periods of no value, and only seemed to enjoy himself when all the rest of the world was mad. Storm and tempest were his halcyon days. As he was a man of some piety, I wonder he never wrote the history of Adam's fall. Alas! in sober sadness, how much nobler a quarry for his tumult-loving genius, would the defection of the whole human race from God and goodness have been, than the small game of such petty revo-

lutions as states and empires. Adieu, my dear Sir, treat me not as I deserve, but according to your own nobleness; in the former case I should hardly hear from you before I may hope to see you; in the latter I shall be relieved from an anxiety about your health, which will be always an interesting subject to,

Dear Sir,

Your ever obliged and truly grateful,

H. M.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Salisbury Palace, 1789.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I do remember with gratitude your kind injunction to me, at parting, to give you a few lines about my insignificant self. I trust you arrived as prosperously at your station in the east as I did at mine in the west; from which tranquil station however, I was soon seduced by the prevailing rhetoric of the Lord and Lady of this episcopal palace. I was not aware, however, that it was such a bustling period, or I should have contrived to have made my pilgrimage to the shrine of Sarum at a quieter season; for we have great dinners, and concerts, and oratorios, it being the music-meeting. At their evening amusements, however, they are so good as to dispense with my attendance, and they are all gone to the festivity of the night, having left me solitary queen of this venerable palace. Indeed I had but too plausible a pretence

for keeping close, having suffered a painful and perilous extraction of a tooth since I came hither; and here I am sitting with an original picture of Henry Lawes, the friend of Milton, and the composer of Comus, looking down upon me, very angry, I suppose, though he does not tell me so, at the disrespect I pay to his art, in deserting all this fine music; while I am much more sorry at not being able to explore, in many a sauntering reverie, the gothic elegance of this beautiful church, and to smooth the ruffled wing of contemplation in its sober cloisters. The bishop has very judiciously taken down an impertinent wall which prevented the cathedral from standing in his garden, and the effect has amply repaid the labour. I purpose, nothing dismayed, to encounter the two extremes of human life, and exchange the palace for the cottage in a day or two, as I am now quite recovered.

Now the evenings are so long, I feel a sort of comfort in knowing that you have sheltered yourself in the social and protected neighbourhood of Richmond, which at this season is so much better for you than the pretty but isolated retreat of Glanvilla.

Talking of long evenings and retreats, I took it into my head during my seclusion at Hampton last year, to read through a shelf of books as they came to hand, without any choice or selection, and it was diverting to see what a mass of crudities I swallowed. It was impossible they should assimilate so as to make a good literary chyle. Take some in the order in which I read them. Devotions of St.

François de Sales, Life of Spinosa, Sentimens de Piété, Cartouche the Highwayman, Fénélon, Queen Christina, Sir Thomas Brown's very learned miscellanies, (and eke very obscure) his namesake Mr. Tom Brown's Letters, Life of St. Paul, Spanish novels, and the Use of Adversity, by Bussy Rabutin. I actually got to the end of my shelf, for I chose a short one, and one on which I was sure there was no poetry, which is too serious an engagement to risk without deliberation.

My dear Madam, ever yours,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Cowslip Green, 1789.

My dear Madam,

What a pleasant letter did you write me, and how delightful your anticipated account of the Paris celebrity. Do not you think Dr. Price's sense and intelligence seems to have nodded, as his prudence has often done, when he talks of the omnipotence to be obtained by an union of the two countries, in his long prelude to his short toast. I desire to embrace all mankind as my brethren, and cordially wish all kingdoms, nations, languages, and individuals were united by the ties of human affection, and of Christian charity; but how these great ends can be brought about by throwing off all restraints, religious and moral; by throwing down all subordination, private and public; by talking of philan-

thropy and acting with cruelty; by introducing the laws and maxims of a little beggarly Greek Republic, into a vast, populous, polished, and corrupt empire, I cannot imagine.

I cannot say I am at all delighted with the new volume of Dr. B—; indeed, after having read four or five of the sermons, I desisted, and left his showy desert for the nourishment afforded by more solid divines. I know I am broaching a very unpopular opinion, but I judge as I feel, and not as I hear. The second discourse, for instance, on Sensibility, will I think be better relished by young ladies from the boarding school, than by serious persons. It appears to me to contain principles not so evangelical as one should expect from so experienced a divine. I think he very injudiciously prefers complexional feeling to those right actions which are performed by people of a sober character, purely from a sense of duty. Is not this setting the virtues of the constitution above the Christian graces, and preferring that goodness which proceeds from a kindly combination of the elements, to the difficult exertion of religious principle? I do not scruple to say that such divinity revolts me, but it will make the book acceptable to many. Sensibility appears to me to be neither good nor evil in itself, but in its application. Under the influence of Christian principle it makes saints and martyrs; ill directed or uncontrolled it is a snare, and the source of every temptation; besides, as people cannot get it if it is not given them, to descant on it seems to me as idle as to recommend

people to have black eyes, or fair complexions: but I did not intend to say a word of all this; I wanted to discourse to you about your many pleasant neighbours, but have left myself but little room. I hope to hear that Mr. Walpole's gout has left him, for though I desired him not to write, I am very anxious to learn how he does. I imagine my excellent friends at Fulham are returning. I had a charming letter from the Bishop, enclosing his admirable charge. I am sure you are delighted with it. I am on the whole better than usual,

and ever yours,

H. More.

CHAPTER V.

At the close of the year 1789, to which our narrative has now brought us, an interesting event occurred, which prepared the way for Hannah More to execute the intention she had long formed, of gradually withdrawing herself from general society, and indulging in a closer intimacy with those whose religious sentiments were congenial with her own. Her four sisters had enabled themselves by their prudence and assiduity to retire from their task of education, with great credit, and in affluent circumstances.

Previously to their taking this step, the eldest Miss More and her three sisters had built for themselves a house in Great Pulteney Street, Bath,[1] and between this residence of their own, and the retreat at Cowslip Green, they were in future to divide their time. For some years Hannah More had been cherishing the hope of devoting herself in her

[1] It is a singular circumstance that all the four houses in which they resided were built by themselves, and in not one of them had death disturbed their happy union, till at the end of fifty years they lost their eldest sister.

little retirement to meditative and literary leisure, and to planting and improving the scene around her; but there was no rest for her but in the consciousness of being useful. She carried into all places and scenes a mind teeming with a tender concern for human happiness, which would not allow her to look upon life and its great and lasting interests, without earnest wishes to be used as an instrument in the work of grace upon the soul, and the extension of the Saviour's kingdom. Having seen much of time mis-spent, and opportunities abused among the gay and great, she had taken up her parable, and proclaimed the truth, through good and evil report, in high places, where the tempter trusted to have reckoned her among his votaries; and finding in rural life and the peasant's cottage the same crimes, in other forms, disfiguring the moral scene, and intercepting the prosperity of the rising generation, she could not, though feeble in frame, withold herself from taking an active part in the instruction of the poor population around her; and in every good work she undertook to promote, her talents and zeal soon made her the leader and directress. During the summer of this year she passed with her sister Martha more time than was usual with her at Cowslip Green, whence they had made occasional excursions to the villages for some miles round, particularly to Cheddar, a distance of ten miles, so famous for its romantic scenery. In the course of these little rambles, finding the poor in their neighbourhood immersed in deplorable ignorance and depravity,

they resolved to supply their spiritual wants. For this purpose they set about establishing without delay a school for the instruction of the poor of Cheddar, which in a short time included nearly three hundred children; and it soon appeared that from the prejudice against educating the poor, which at that time prevailed in many quarters, the neighbourhood in which this vigorous aggression upon ignorance and barbarity was begun was by no means exempt. Many of the opulent farmers patriotically opposed the innovation; one of them observing, that the country into which the ladies were introducing this disturbance had never prospered since religion had been brought into it by the monks of Glastonbury. To find proper masters and mistresses for their purpose, appeared to be their greatest difficulty; but by their patient and unwearied exertions in qualifying persons for the office, they at length surmounted this and every other impediment.

Some of the letters of Miss H. More at this period, which are very interesting, and present a pleasing picture of her incipient plans for instructing the children of the poor, are here offered to the reader.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

George Hotel, Cheddar, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

Though this is but a *romantic place*, as my friend Matthew well observed, yet you would laugh to see the bustle I am in. I was told we should meet with great opposition if I did not try to propitiate

the chief despot of the village, who is very rich, and very brutal; so I ventured into the den of this monster, in a country as savage as himself, near Bridgewater. He begged I would not think of bringing any religion into the country; it was the worst thing in the world for the poor, for it made them lazy and useless. In vain did I represent to him that they would be more industrious as they were better principled; and that, for my own part, I had no selfish views in what I was doing. He gave me to understand that he knew the world too well to believe either the one or the other. Somewhat dismayed to find that my success bore no proportion to my submissions, I was almost discouraged from more visits; but I found that friends must be secured at all events, for if these rich savages set their faces against us, and influenced the poor people, it was clear that nothing but hostilities would ensue; so I made eleven more of these agreeable visits; and as I improved in the art of canvassing, had better success. Miss Wilberforce would have been shocked, had she seen the petty tyrants whose insolence I stroked and tamed, the ugly children I fondled, the pointers and spaniels I caressed, the cyder I commended, and the wine I swallowed. After these irresistible flatteries, I inquired of each if he could recommend to me a house; and said that I had a little plan which I hoped would secure their orchards from being robbed, their rabbits from being shot, their poultry from being stolen, and which might lower the poor-rates. If effect be the best proof of eloquence, then

mine was a good speech, for I gained at length the hearty concurrence of the whole people, and their promise to discourage or favour the poor in proportion as they were attentive or negligent in sending their children. Patty, who is with me, says she has good hope that the hearts of some of these rich poor wretches may be touched; they are at present as ignorant as the beasts that perish, intoxicated every day before dinner, and plunged in such vices as make me begin to think London a virtuous place. By their assistance, I procured immediately a good house, which, when a partition is taken down, and a window added, will receive a great number of children. The house, and an excellent garden of almost an acre of ground, I have taken at once for six guineas and a half per year. I have ventured to take it for *seven years*,—there's courage for you! It is to be put in order *immediately*; "for the night cometh:" and it is a comfort to think, that though I may be dust and ashes in a few weeks, yet by that time this business will be in actual motion. I have written to different manufacturing towns for a mistress, but can get nothing hitherto. As to the mistress for the *Sunday* school, and the religious part, I have employed Mrs. Easterbrook, of whose judgment I have a good opinion. I hope Miss W—— will not be frightened, but I am afraid she must be called a methodist.

I asked the farmers if they had no resident curate; they told me they had a right to insist on one; which right, they confessed, they had never ventured to exercise, for fear *their tithes should*

be raised! I blushed for my species. The Glebe House is good for my purpose. The Vicarage of Cheddar is in the gift of the Dean of Wells; the value nearly fifty pounds per annum. The incumbent is a Mr. R——: who has something to do, but I cannot here find out what, in the University of Oxford, where he resides. The curate lives at Wells, twelve miles distant. They have only service once a week, and there is scarcely an instance of a poor person being visited, or prayed with. The living of Axbridge belongs to the Prebendary of Wiveliscombe, in the cathedral of Wells. The annual value is about fifty pounds. The incumbent, about sixty years of age. The Prebend to which this rectory belongs is in the gift of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Mr. G. is intoxicated about six times a week, and very frequently is prevented from preaching by two black eyes, honestly earned by fighting. Mr. —— is a middle-aged man; of his character they know nothing. The curate, a sober young man.

Love to Miss W.

Your much obliged,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Cowslip Green, 1789.

My dear Friend,

It happens very unluckily, that *both* of us should so partake of the nature of ghosts, that *neither* of us care to speak till we are spoken to; and that though

we are of a sex famous for loving to have the *last* word, it should be so difficult to make us pronounce the *first*.

I *have* read Paley's new book, and think the Evidence he adduces so strong, that it would carry him through a court of judicature. It is very pleasant to see the truth of Christianity receive an accession of strength from such collateral circumstances. You talk as if I lived in the world, and knew what passed in it. You should have told me what it was about. I did not know Mr. Burgess had published a sermon; but I will inquire for it, for he is one of the young clergy of whom I think particularly well. Some of his compositions are at present my chief study; not, however, those which procure admiration, or gain fame: for the Salisbury Spelling Book, and the Parochial Exercises, are those which at present attract my attention. I have been ferreting about these two months among the neglected villages of this hardly Christian country, to find out those places which are particularly destitute of religious advantages; and have fixed on the central parish of six large ones, which have not so much as a resident *curate*, for the principal scene of my operations. I have hired an old vicarage house which has had no inhabitant these hundred years, and in this I propose to place some pious and knowing people to instruct the poor, who are more vicious and ignorant than I could have conceived possible in a country which calls itself Christian. The vicar, who lives a long way off, is repairing the house for me, and as he is but ninety-four years old, he insists

on my taking a lease, and is as rigorous about the rent as if I were taking it for an Assembly Room. It will take some time to put this in order, but next Sunday we are to open a smaller school, a sort of detachment from these head quarters; and as all these villages are from six to ten miles distance from me, you will believe I am not a little engaged. I am not apt to be very sanguine in my expectations; but I comfort myself by remembering that we have nothing to do with *events:* and, indeed, the uncommon prosperity we have at Cheddar ought to encourage us. We have a great number there who could only tell their letters when we began, and can already read the Testament, and not only say the Catechism, but give pertinent answers to any questions which involve the first principles of Christianity; but then the ability and piety of the teachers we have there, surpass what we can expect to find again. I should not enlarge on these little circumstances so much to any body else; but I know you like these Goody-two-shoe details; besides, if there were any merit (I hate the Popish word) in these little schemes, it is not mine; for I have little money, and if I had much, I should, too probably, spend it as those who have a great deal commonly do. I know myself too well to blame others much.

Poor Patty has had a wretched summer—in almost constant pain; she desires to be kindly remembered to you, as do the whole sisterhood: they are all in the little thatched cottage, and we cultivate roses and cabbages *con spirito.* The Bath house is promised to be ready by Michaelmas: you are absolved from

secrecy on that head. But whenever I leave my hermitage, it will be with regret. I am made for this quiet dull life, and have almost lost all taste for any other.

If you are still at Mongewell, pray present my best respects to the excellent Lord and Lady of that pleasant mansion.

Yours, most affectionately,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Cowslip Green, 1789.

My dear Friend,

I intended to have answered your little shabby letter immediately, though you did not deserve it; but I had at the time so violent a rheumatic pain in my head and face, as to make me unfit for every thing. The horrible operation of tooth-drawing has partly relieved me, and large doses of James's powder I hope will complete the cure. As to my adventures, they have been neither numerous nor brilliant. I have never stirred out of the 'Cowslip's Bell,' since I crept into it, and it is with sorrow and regret I find the time approaching when my sisters will expect me to join them at Bath. I hate Bath. They are all there furnishing the new mansion, except your sentimental friend, who is with me enjoying our quiet cottage. She too has had the same disorder, rheumatism in her head, for some weeks; but happily we have never both been confined together, so that one at least has been able

constantly to superintend our now large and extensive concerns. We have often agreed that

'To mend the world's a vast design,'

and I am now convinced of the truth of this, by the difficulties attending the half dozen parishes we have undertaken. It is grievous to reflect, that while we are sending missionaries to our distant colonies, our own villages are perishing for lack of instruction. We have in this neighbourhood thirteen adjoining parishes, without so much as even a resident curate. I am deeply convinced how very poor and inadequate any miserable attempts of mine can be, to rectify so wide-spread an evil; yet I could not be comfortable till something was attempted. We have therefore established schools and various little institutions, over a tract of country of ten or twelve miles, and have near five hundred children in training. As the land is almost pagan, we bring down persons of great reputation for piety from other places, and the improvements are great for the time. But how we shall be able to keep up these things amidst so much opposition, vice, poverty, and ignorance, as we have to deal with, I cannot guess. I should not enter into these details, but I know you expect an account of what I have been doing.

As soon as all my plans are completed here, I purpose going to Bath, that is, towards the end of this month, if not sooner starved out by the thin-walled cottage. I think I shall drink the waters *till after Christmas at least*, if I should have the

good fortune to escape coughs; which, however, I have no right to expect.

I suppose you will not write these two years at least. I had a low-spirited letter lately from Mrs. Carter, who seems much hurt by the wickedness and extravagance of a relation. I grieve she should have anything to grieve her. I wish I knew with whom you were; for if it is with somebody I know and like, I should be glad to say something kind to them.

I think Dr. B——'s third volume a very poor thing, much inferior to the others in point of composition; and so far are they from evangelical, that I think some of the sermons even go on a false principle; but do not betray me, for I know his popularity, and one must have lived very little indeed in the world, not to know the cause of it too. But when one grows pert, it is time to conclude. Patty sends her love.

Your's affectionately,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Cowslip Green.

My dear Mrs. Carter,

It is a pity that you and I should both of us have so much of obstinacy in our disposition, as not to speak till we are spoken to. I cannot, however, any longer resist my inclination of inquiring how you do? how your spirits are? and whether that naughty head of your's is as adverse to your

comfort as ever? these are questions in which I am truly and deeply interested, though from my delaying so long to propose them, you are not bound to believe it. I thank God I am upon the whole as well as usual, indeed rather more free from coughs. Poor Patty is still a grievous sufferer; the rest tolerably well; and all of us together cultivating my pretty little garden, and enjoying many blessings. The house at Bath is in great forwardness, and nearly ready for us.

Our friend, Mrs. Garrick, who is still at Bristol Wells, has been to see us several times; she does not think herself quite recovered. To those who have enjoyed, during a long life, sound and perfect health, illness is particularly alarming. Let you and I, my dear friend, number our infirm health among the merciful providences which have been dispensed to us. How much more do we enjoy our intervals of ease, than those who know no pains; and I hope we may be enabled to turn the pain itself to good account. "All things work together for good to them that love God."

I know nothing of Mrs. Montagu. From our dear bishop, to whom I shall inclose this, I have just received a most pleasant letter. I think his charge written with great spirit and seriousness. I do not wish him so ill, as to desire to see him bishop of *this* diocese, but I do wish for some salutary interference among the clergy of this neighbourhood. While we are sending missionaries to India, our own villages are in Pagan darkness, and upon many of them scarcely a ray of Christianity has shone. I

speak from the most minute and diligent examination. I have been constantly occupied this whole summer, in trying what my poor abilities, and my small influence over others, richer and better, can bring about. In one particular spot, for instance, there are six large parishes, without so much as a resident curate. Three commonly-gifted curates cannot serve eight churches. Through the kind assistance of a friend or two, I am endeavouring to fix schools and other little institutions, in the most destitute of these places, and as they are from six to ten miles distant, you will judge that it employs a good deal of my time. I have the satisfaction to tell you, that Cheddar, our first establishment, goes on most prosperously. We have a great many children in that parish only, and by the ability and piety of our teachers, their improvement surpasses my warmest hopes. I make no apology to you, my dear friend, for the freedom of these details. Alas, there are so few to whom one *can* speak or write on such subjects, that in conversing with *them* one makes oneself amends for the silence one is constrained to observe towards the world in general.

I wish you could see my *roses*. I have a double end in such a wish, for then I should see *you*. I am truly and faithfully, my dearest Mrs. Carter,

Your affectionate and sincere,

H. More.

We will now enter upon the series of letters to her sister Martha, which introduce her to us in the year 1790, on her usual visit to Mrs. Garrick.

From H. More to her sister.

Hampton, 1790.

Mr. Walpole has given me two guineas for our poor man who was cut down after he had nearly hanged himself. I have written to Mr. Hare to continue his allowance, and still to endeavour to impress his mind with a sense of religion, and repentance for his crime. I have got an extract of Mr. Fraser's evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons—*le voici.* 'I was on shore with my linguist for the benefit of my health. He conducted me to a spot where some of the countrymen were met to put a sucking child to death. I asked them why they murdered it? They answered because it was of no value. I told them that in that case, I hoped they would make me a present of it; they answered that if I had any use for the child, then it *was* worth money. I first offered them some knives, but that would not do; they however sold the child to me for a mug of brandy. It proved to be the child of a woman whom the captain of our ship had purchased that very morning, We carried it on board, and judge of the mother's joy when she saw her own child put on board the same ship; *her child,* whom she concluded was murdered. She fell on her knees

and kissed my feet.' In what light does this anecdote place this detestable trade?

I think very often with concern of poor Yearsley's situation. I could get a famous medicine which has done wonders, if you can contrive to find out if she would take it; but I suppose the poor creature would be afraid to take any thing of my recommending. Perhaps Mr. B—— could contrive to inquire without naming me. I should be happy to relieve her, and no time should be lost. I am much concerned for the loss of good Bishop Halifax, who has left a wife and seven or eight children. This is the second Bishop of St. Asaph, *both* my friends, who have died within the year.

From the same to the same.

London, March 4, 1790.

We came to town on Thursday night. I kept close on Friday, to try to qualify myself for a town life. On Saturday I dined at Mrs. Montagu's, with fourteen people, and went in the evening to meet Lord and Lady Dartmouth; perhaps you may think this was enough for one day, but I was obliged after this to call in at London House, where I found many of my good friends, who received me with great kindness, which, had I been rich, or great, or wise, or witty, might have been feigned, but being neither, I hoped might be sincere.

As to improving upon the Cheddar scheme, I have thought it over soberly and coolly. Surely no harm can arise from giving leave to such parents as

desire to hear their children instructed, to come in the evening, and be instructed themselves. We will at first limit the number; as to the time, an hour will be quite sufficient; more would break in upon the children's time, and take parents too long from their own families. They are so ignorant that they need to be taught the very elements of Christianity. Speak to Mr. Foster the clergyman on the subject; he is disposed to be obliging and kind: he must see that it will enable them to understand his sermons better at church, and will bring more people there. On Monday Mrs. Boscawen fetched me to dine with her, and was so kind as to put off going to a concert where she was engaged, that I might sit the evening with her, which I did in my bonnet, snug. Lady Mount Edgecombe made me a long call, and detailed all the particulars of the royal visit.

To the same.

March 20, 1790.

And so the Emperor Joseph and Mr. Howard are both called in the same week to give in their final account. I want Mrs. Montagu to write a dialogue in the shades between these two persons. Her talents would make it entertaining and instructive: the difficulty would be to give it a Christian cast. And I want another dialogue between those two murderers on a great scale, Charles V. and Louis XIV. which would introduce the causes of the present state of their respective countries. I want also a dialogue of a gayer kind,

the interlocutors to be Bishop Wilkins and Dean Swift, the one with his wings, the other with his Laputa.

Things are getting worse and worse in France. A lady of quality the other day in Paris, rung her bell, and desired the footman to send up her maid Jeannotte. In vain she rung and rung; the man told her, Jeannotte refused to come; or be any longer under any body. At last Jeannotte walked into the room with a pamphlet open in her hand, and sat down. The lady astonished, asked her what she meant. '*C'est que je lise,*' said Jeannotte, without taking her eyes off the book. The lady insisted on an explanation of this impertinence. The maid replied with great sang froid, '*Madame, c'est que nous allons tous devenir egaux, et je me prepare pour l'egalité.*' I have conceived an utter aversion to liberty according to the present idea of it in France. What a cruel people they are! A duel was to be fought between two gentlemen a little way from Paris: it was heard of, and people went to it as to a party of pleasure; the account added, *il y avoit trente whiskeys remplis de dames.*

To the same.

London, April, 1790.

At Mrs. Montagu's the other day, I met Mr. Burke and a pleasant party; indeed he is a sufficiently pleasant party of himself. There was also Mr. Mackenzie (the Man of Feeling), which determined me to go.

As to London, I shall be glad to get out of it; the old little parties are not to be had in the usual style of comfort; every thing is great, and vast, and late, and magnificent, and dull. I very seldom go to them, and always repent when I do. The old are all growing young, and seventy dresses like seventeen. Plenty of reading here, but not quite time for it. Five volumes of Bruce's Abyssinia on the table. You know he has been suspected, but I believe without reason, to have hazarded a thousand extravagances in these travels.

I rejoice that our dear friend Dr. Horne will be the new bishop. I have not been so much vexed for a long time, as at Sir Charles Middleton's resignation of the comptrollership. They would not consent to help and forward his excellent plans of reform, in that important branch of the government, and an honest man does not feel happy in a situation where he sees a great deal of good to be done, which he is not allowed to do. I am going to dine with Mrs. Boscawen; the Duchess is just come to town and presents her daughter. How I pity a sober woman who has a daughter to present to this dissipated world!

To the same.

London, April 25, 1790.

You will see by the inclosed notes that the Red Cross Knight (a name Mrs. Montagu gives to Mr. Wilberforce, after Spencer's Knight of Holiness) and I have spent a comfortable day together

at the Middletons. Yesterday I dined with the Montagus, and passed the evening in Portman Square. She has fitted up her great room in a superb style, with pillars of verde antique, &c. and has added an acre to what was before a very large town garden. Still the same inexhaustible spirits; the same taste for business and magnificence; three or four great dinners in a week, with Luxembourgs, Montmorencies, and Czartoriskis. I had rather for my own part live in our cottage at Cheddar. She is made for the great world, and is an ornament to it; it is an element she was born to breathe in. We have spent our Easter at Hampton in delightful quiet, suited to the solemn season. Breathing a pure air for a few days has somewhat set me up. Though I think my last winter has not been so bad on the whole as the two preceding ones; yet I have had such a succession of coughs that I yielded to the importunity of Mrs. Boscawen, and sent for Dr. Pitcairn. I told him I did not send for him to cure a cold, but to have a conversation with him about my general health; that he must *do as they do in France;* that is, discard palliatives, and give me a new constitution.

This year Hannah More published a volume entitled 'An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World.' It was bought up and read with the same avidity as its predecessor, the 'Thoughts on the Manners of the Great.' In this essay she animadverted in a bolder strain on the same prevailing corruptions, and more in detail;—on the

decay of domestic piety, and especially on the absence of religion from the education of the higher classes.

Tracing the want of moral restraint to its true source—the prevailing indifference to vital religion, she brought her charges so home to the experience and conviction of her readers, to as make many a Felix tremble, and to touch the consciences of many who were sitting at their ease in self-righteous complacency. The Spectator had the address beyond all the works that went before it, to gain an audience for religion in the societies of the vain, the unthinking, and the unstable; but then it was religion in a compromising form, modified at least, if not unchristianized, to please the trifling and conciliate the unhumbled; but the challenges of Hannah More penetrated the proudest and gayest resorts, and surprised and shamed the votaries of fashion in their full career, without giving to truth either dress or disguise to conceal its awful realities. Her's was the solitary case in the whole history of man and his anomalies, in which severe and sober truth was enabled to make its way through all the obstacles of habit, interest and prejudice, without art, or stratagem, or machinery. She went forth with her sling, and her pebbles from the pure brook, and fought and triumphed. Her clear understanding had no other ally than the sanctity of her cause; and by her honest and vigorous efforts the whole reading world, and a large part of the idle world, were constrained to listen and confess, while she told them in fearless

anguage, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The manner in which one half of the Sunday was spent, even by many who made a conscience of going to church on the other, was an evil which she saw increasing, and which from the example of the great, had more and more infected the lower orders.

As a proof of this deterioration, she often mentioned what she had heard from some of her older friends, that when Bussy, the French minister at our court, was ordered to leave London instantly, he was forced to delay his departure, because no waggon would stir on a Sunday. In this little work she insisted more strongly on scriptural motives, as the only foundation of a Christian life. She had often mourned over that spirit of worldliness, which some of her amiable and benevolent associates did not perceive to be incompatible with real religion. She saw, and felt, and loved much that was good in them; yet perceiving the tone of their piety to be lamentably low, her conscience would not allow her to rest, till she had so far overcome the natural gentleness of her temper, and her unwillingness to give pain, as thus to bear her public testimony to the claims of Christian consistency. Not that she appears to have been sanguine in her hopes, but she acquitted herself of what appeared to her to be a duty, and left the event to God. We find that within two years from its publication, the 'Estimate' had reached a fifth edition.

The reader will find interspersed among the following letters, many interesting and lively remarks, on this publication principally, and on other subjects.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1790.

Indeed, my dear friend, your plan of secrecy would have succeeded perfectly, and you would have been completely concealed, if giants could be concealed; but if, like Saul, you are higher than any of the people from the shoulders and upwards, you must be conspicuous. If your energy, your style, your piety, is so superior, you must be discovered through all the veils that are so carefully thrown over you: *vous percez tout.* That which you intended I should hold over you, I did with the utmost simplicity, according to your intention; for being asked one day at Lady Rothes's, if I had seen Miss More's book, and being told it had been out four or five days, I answered I had not heard of it, nor did I believe it was Miss More's, because if it had been, Mr. Cadell would have sent it to me immediately, as he always did by the kind order of my friend; 'from the author,' being written in the blank leaf: but that I had received no such book. To this plea I was answered, that I had only to read it, and I should find *internal evidence* that would leave me no doubt of the author. Thus you see the giant appeared, and so plainly, that having sent for the book next morning, and read some twenty

pages, I sent the man back for four more. A few days afterwards I received the great favour of a present of a copy from the Bishop of London himself, which you may believe I value highly; but as it is already out of print till a new edition is published, I have had occasion to lend it, while I have given others to god-daughters, and have not one left.

Your's affectionately,

F. B.

From the Bishop of London to Miss H. More.

St. James's Square, 1790.

Aut Erasmus, aut Diabolus, was, you know, the laconic and expressive speech of Sir Thomas More, to a certain stranger who had astonished him with a torrent of wit, eloquence, and learning. *Aut Morus aut Angelus,* exclaimed the Bishop of London, before he had read six pages of a certain delicate *little book* that was sent to him a few days ago. Such precisely was the note I was sitting down to write to you, at the very moment I received your full and true confession of that mortal sin, of presuming once more to disturb the sweet repose and tranquillity of the fashionable world.

Indeed, my dear friend, (if you will allow me to call you so,) it is in vain to think of concealing yourself. Your style and manner are so marked, and so confessedly superior to those of any other moral writer of the present age, that you will be immediately detected by every one that pretends to

any taste in judging of composition, or any skill in discriminating the characteristic excellences of one author from another. You have certainly taken that wise bird the ostrich for your model on this occasion, who, in order to conceal himself from his pursuers, runs his head into the sands, and though his whole body stands out behind him, is perfectly convinced that nobody can see him. There are but few persons, I will venture to say, in Great Britain, that could write such a book;—that could convey so much sound, evangelical morality, and so much genuine Christianity, in such neat and elegant language. It will, if I mistake not, soon find its way into every fine lady's library, and if it does not find its way into her heart and her manners, the fault will be her own.

Mrs. Kennicott has been in town for a day, and has just called here. She means to come soon and make a little stay. Pray bring with you some 'Bonner's Ghosts.' Mrs. Porteus desires to be very affectionately and gratefully remembered to you,—gratefully for the pleasure she received from the '*Estimate*;' for I read it to her last night, and we thought the evening as well and as pleasantly spent, as if we had been at the Pantheon.

I am, dear Madam,

Your very sincere and obliged,

B. LONDON.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

Coleman Street Buildings, Feb. 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Many good things I do receive in the course of a week. The last week brought me, amongst other good things, 'An Estimate of the religion of the fashionable World,' with the words '*from the author,*' on the blank page. Somebody deserves my thanks for the pleasure the perusal gave me, and I conceive that nobody has a better title to them than yourself. I venture to take it for granted. I had rather be chargeable with a mistake, than suspected of ingratitude; but I think I am not mistaken, and therefore I thank you for it again and again.

The fashionable world, by their *numbers,* form a phalanx not easily impressible; and their *habits* of life are as armour of proof, which renders them not easily vulnerable. Neither the rude club of a boisterous reformer, nor the pointed delicate weapons of the author or authoress before me, can probably overthrow and rout them. But I do hope that an individual here and there may be wounded, and made to wince, and apply for healing to the leaves of the tree of life. A few instances, yea, a single instance of this kind, would be honestly worth the writing of one book or the printing of a thousand; for to save one soul from death, is an event of greater real importance, than to save a whole kingdom from *temporal* ruin. Besides, in such an age as this, it is an honour and privilege to

be able and willing to bear a testimony against evil, and in favour of the truth, though it should go no further. We are not answerable for the success, but we are bound to the attempt, according to the talents and opportunities afforded. I trust the unknown, though not unguessed-at, writer of 'the Estimate,' will hear in that day, "Forasmuch as it was in thine heart, thou did'st well that it was in thine heart." They who dare to confess the Lord, and to appear openly on his side, in the midst of this sinful and perverse generation, shall find, to their comfort, that he will confess them, and appear on their behalf, before the holy angels and the assembled world. It will be seen *there*, who acted the wisest part *here*.

I once received a fairy present '*from the author*,' on the 'Manners of the Great,' which likewise cost me nearly a minute's brown study to determine who sent it. I hit the right nail on the head at that time; and I am but a poor critic if they did not both come from the same hand; for while the similarity seems strongly marked, there is that difference which might be expected from the difference of time; the former was like the morning spread upon the mountains, which I accepted as the harbinger of advancing day. *Meliora latent.* I shall now long to see a third publication. In short, Madam, if among the present members of the fashionable world, any can be found unprejudiced, and free from deep prepossessions, or so far as they are so, I expect and hope that 'the Estimate,' if it comes in their way, will prove to them, "as

a light shining in a dark place," for which they will have reason to praise God, and to thank the writer. My prayers will be for a blessing on it, and that in your endeavours to water others, you may be abundantly watered, comforted, and enriched yourself.

With my respects and best wishes to your sisters, if you are with them, and Miss Catlett's to yourself,

I remain, my dear Madam,
Your affectionate and obliged servant,
JOHN NEWTON.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Cowslip Green, July 26, 1791.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your obliging and kind letter, made still more agreeable, I think, by the local circumstance of its being dated from Teston, gave me much pleasure, especially as it announced the tidings of your intended visit. As you give me the privilege of choosing between August and September, you will not wonder that I prefer the former, if it were only because it is the nearest, and it is the natural bent of selfish human nature, always to make sure of a good thing as soon as possible. As early, then, in August as may fall in with your general projects, we shall rejoice to see you, and as soon as you have made your arrangements, you will be so good as to let me know your time, that I may order my other

little matters with an eye to it; for having a good many little schemes and desires in my head, I shall contrive to work the harder before your appearance, that I may afford to give myself some holidays while you are here. Pray, my dear Sir, try to divest your memory of the delights and elegancies of Teston, before you turn your face towards my little thatched cottage, where a quiet cell, and a few books, and a maple dish, and 'a dinner of herbs,' are all you can in reason expect; but then I hope we shall be able to furnish the appropriate sauce of 'quietness therewith,' for which I trust you will be contented to renounce the 'stalled ox' of noisy London. Pray let me know what time you intend to bestow upon us;—the more the better. I hope you will do some good in this dark region, where the light of Christianity seems scarcely to have penetrated. We are sending missionaries to our colonies, while our villages are perishing for lack of instruction. You will hardly believe the things you will see and hear in this neighbourhood.

I must not conclude without expressing my thankfulness to the Almighty, that I have my little cottage standing to receive you in. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed." My house has been on fire. Silently did it burn the whole night, and had so nearly burned through the beams of the ceiling, as to reach within a few inches of my sister's bed, where she lay insensible of her danger. But we were not, I trust, insensible of our deliverance, which was very providential: for we had no water. As it is, a few days will

repair the damage. My sisters join in kind regards with,

My dear Sir,
Your much obliged and faithful
HANNAH MORE.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 19.

MY DEAR SIR,

I should have thanked you sooner for your very agreeable letter, but have been a good deal indisposed with a cold caught by walking over our mountains pretty late at night, which I was made to do by a frightful accident of a horse falling, but without doing me the least harm;—Not a bone of me was broken. This is the second striking deliverance I have had within two months; the other you know, was from fire. I hope I am not unthankful to divine providence; though I grieve to say, my cold heart is not so much animated by a sense of these great mercies, as by the comparatively small favours and kindnesses I receive from poor perishing mortals like myself.

I assure you your kind wishes, and your affectionate remembrance of the mountains of Mendip and of the little hermitage at the foot of it, are returned with great sincerity. Your pipe still maintains its station in the black-currant bush, and that hand would be deemed most presumptuous and disrespectful which should presume to displace it. For my own part, the pipe of Tityrus, though in my

youthful days I liked it passing well, would not now be deemed a more venerable relic; and even the little sick maid Lizzy, who gratefully remembers the spiritual comfort you administered to her, often cries out 'Oh dear! I hope nobody will break Mr. Newton's pipe.'

Poor Miss Catlett! I hope she has had no more terrors. Whatever other compliments and kindnesses she may have received since she left Cowslip Green, I will venture to say not one of her friends has treated her with a grander thunder-storm; which, if she had happened to admire it as much as I do, she would have reckoned among the august spectacles of her tour. In such alarms, however, may she always find friends as commiserating, and cupboards as convenient. All beg to be recommended most kindly to her.

I thank you very cordially, my dear Sir, for the encouragement you give me, and the kind assurance of being remembered in your prayers; though I am not (I thank God) what is called low-spirited, my spirits are not strong;—from the make of my mind I am too easily acted upon by things without. This is partly owing to that natural infirmity which those who flatter us call sensibility, and partly to a weak faith; and the little progress I have made in the divine life. I live in the hope of growing every year wiser and better, but that hope has been hitherto so little realized, that it would be quite faint were it not sometimes refreshed by those gracious promises so frequently held forth to us. I feel I *do* nothing, and the motives of my best actions (I use that epithet

only comparatively) are not pure; some human mixtures, some debasing alloys enter into those things which appear to others the most right. I am anxious about events which yet I know and acknowledge to be in higher hands; I do not bend my own to the divine will, and feel an impatience under such dispensations as are against my liking. Some which do not really cross me I bear well enough, and thence get a great deal of commendation which I do not deserve.

Patty and I remember you as we are trotting over the hills. She desires her affectionate regards, as do all the rest. You would enjoy the vale of Cowslips in this renewed spring:—we have every thing of the golden age except the innocence; the garden is full of roses as in June, and we have an apple tree literally covered at the same moment with fruit nearly ripe and fresh blossoms.

Adieu, my dear Sir. Pray remember that no one stands more in need of your prayers than.

Your most obliged and faithful,

H. More.

From Sir James Stonehouse to Miss Sarah More.

Oct. 17, 1791.

Sally is a very good Sally. Sally came and took care of me when I was sick. Sally will answer my letters. Poetess is a great lady, and flies abroad on the wings of cherubims, twenty miles from Cowslip Green, and for what?—why, truly to see poor ragged boys and girls, and to teach them to fly.

I send you a copy of my letter to your Bishop of St. David's, but I have not yet read it, and so send it me back; were I to live at Bath, and any of the sisterhood desired me to lend them a book, I should say, answer me these three questions:—

When will you *begin* to read it?—How many days do you desire to keep it?—Will you assuredly send it me back in that time, that I may read it *again myself*, or lend it to others?

I have had a good letter from a good woman, Mrs. Trimmer, who tells me the sixth edition of 'Thoughts on the Manners of the Great,' is in the press, and it is in vain for your sister any longer to deny the production. Let her fix her name to this edition. Never surely was any little treatise more universally applauded. I hope she is preparing all her works for the press: send volume by volume to Cadell, that there may be no delay in printing. Do not let her stay till she has corrected the whole.

The music on the terrace on Sundays is pregnant with evil from Windsor to London; it infects all the neighbourhood ten miles round Windsor, and oh! what an irreligious example to the youths of Eton! Yet a proclamation against vice and profaning the sabbath, is ordered to be read quarterly in our churches.

Do come and see us, we have scarcely a friend in the world we can open our minds to, as we can to the sisterhood.

Your's most affectionately,

JAMES STONEHOUSE.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

Nov. 19, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Enclosed you have my apology for breaking in upon you again so very soon. I was willing to send you Mr. Cowper's letter, while it is fresh and new, and not quite willing to deny myself the pleasure of paying a pepper-corn acknowledgment in my own name. As I told him the paper must not be doubled, he is waiting till somebody comes to town, who has a parcel long enough and broad enough to receive the paper in its extended dimensions; and he still waits, because so many persons who travel hither from Olney, carry their travelling wardrobe in their pockets.

I have, as he says, heard of the pompous edition of Milton that is to come abroad. I have not seen the printed proposals; the report sufficed for me. I am sorry to see the author of the 'Task' degraded into a mere editor, though of Milton himself, whom I certainly prefer to a hundred Homers. But it seems he is not to be merely an editor; he thinks he may do some service by notes and elucidations, not in the manner of Dr. Newton, but in a moral and religious strain.

Yet it is pitiful, and to many who love him, it seems strange, yea passing strange, that a writer so truly original, should not favour us with writings in his own original way. It is not, however, quite strange to me. He has many friends, so called, who,

in the time of his recess, cared little about him, till his name and fame as an author began to be spread abroad in the polite circles. Since that period they have buzzed about him, and by their fine words and fair speeches, have imperceptibly given an inferior direction to his aims, and withdrawn him more out of my reach. For there was a time when he would not have undertaken a work of any extent, without previously apprising me. The state of his mind makes me cautious how I express my grief and disappointment, otherwise I should write to him in large letters. But as it must be so, I will try to be glad that he has not been led to a worse subject than Milton, or to a worse task than to translate his untranslated poems. I hinted to him my fears, lest your attention to your important services around Mendip, should deprive the public of what they still expect from your pen. He has caught my fears, but I hope both his and mine will prove groundless. I should still like Cowslip Green, even in November, if you, or any of the ladies were there; otherwise, perhaps, I might begin to think it dreary. I am now at a loss where to find you and Miss Patty on a Sunday morning, for I think you can hardly travel much in the weather we have had lately, but Mr. H. T. will tell my letter where to look for you.

You will allow me gently to sigh over the poor account you give me of your health; yet I know all is right. Methinks if I could, I would give you and Miss Patty, not shoes, but nerves and sinews of brass and iron, to fit you for traversing Mendip; but I should do wrong, for how then would the

power of God be manifested in your *weakness*. It is really singular, that such an athletic service should be appointed for such delicate instruments. It is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes; may he have all the glory, and may you have that comfort and satisfaction, which may make you a rich compensation for all you suffer in so good a cause.

I send a large portion of my best love, respects, and thanks to be distributed among the five ladies, together with Miss Catlett's. If any of them have left you, I beg you to send their quota after them to Bath. We are, through mercy, both well. I am in perfect health, and as comfortable, in a temporal view, as I even wish to be. But still I miss —I feel—alas! my poor heart! it will beat. There is a void within, which the creature cannot fill, but the Creator can. Blessed be the Lord my Saviour, I can say, 'All is well.'

I am, most sincerely, your affectionate
and much obliged servant,
JOHN NEWTON.

From Mr. Cowper to Mr. Newton.

1791.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I should not have waited till Mr. B——'s journey would afford me an opportunity to send by him, but should have given you an earlier account of Mrs. Unwin, knowing how kindly you interest yourself in her recovery, had not her amendment been so very gradual, that the difference between day

and day has been almost imperceptible. The course of many days, however, has at last made a considerable difference, and would the season allow her more air and exercise, she would soon, I believe, be restored, if not absolutely to health, at least to such a share of it as she usually enjoys:—a greater temporal mercy than this I cannot know, and should be happy if my spiritual mercies were such, as enabled me to be as thankful for it as I ought.

I send you at last the long-expected verses, not worth the package or the carriage, and claiming no other merit than merely that of evidencing my readiness to comply with the request both of an old friend and a fair lady.

In vain to live from age to age,
We modern bards endeavour;
In Patty's book I wrote one page,
And gained my point for ever.

WILLIAM COWPER.
Exemplar verum.
Witness, J. N.

For yours I return you many thanks; if they do not pretend to the laurel, all ambition of which you disclaim, they at least deserve it; not indeed on account of the labour you have expended upon them, for it is evident they did not cost you much, but for the ease and unaffected simplicity of their manner, which prove the author's good sense and judgment, and are a thousand times more pleasing, in a composition on such a subject, than fine tropes

and figures. I never yet believed that a poet, if he could be very flowery on the death of a friend, cared much about it. No tears are so ostentatious as those of the weeping muses.

My hands are very full of business of various kinds, and I cannot at present add more than that, with Mrs. Unwin's best remembrances, and with Lady Hesketh's compliments,

I remain, my dear friend, most truly your's,

WILLIAM COWPER.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Bath, 1791.

MY DEAR SIR,

I believe I ought to thank you for one, two, three (I fear I might go on) very kind, very agreeable, and very instructive letters. Perhaps I could bring no very *good* excuse for not having answered them directly; though, if I were disingenuous, I could bring a great many *bad* ones; but I am so far from countenancing that vulgar doctrine of 'a bad excuse being better than none,' that I really think none is better than such middling ones as I should bring; so I throw myself on your mercy, and proceed to thank you in Patty's name for Mr. Cowper's stanza. It is elegantly turned, but I confess if it were to me, I should not have been contented to be put off with a compliment, from a hand which can deal out so much nobler things. You know my admiration for this truly great genius, but I am really grieved that he should lower his aims so far as to stoop to

become a mere editor and translator. It is Ulysses shooting from a baby's bow. Why does he quit the heights of Solyma for the dreams of Pindus? 'What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?' In his own original way he has few competitors; in his new walk he has many superiors; he can do the best things better than any man, but others can do middling things better than he.

I was indeed much pleased with your friend Mr. Stillingfleet; a very solid, judicious, serious man; with a great deal of piety, regulated by a great deal of prudence. Another acquaintance of yours, of a directly opposite cast of character, I think, has lately been to see us—Mr. Collins; he seems very amiable, and I believe does a great deal of good by that very eccentricity, which, if practised by Mr. Stillingfleet, would utterly defeat his usefulness. There is nothing in which I more admire the wisdom and goodness of God than in his various gifts to ministers; so accommodated to the various wants of their hearers, that I believe he works his will by every sort of instrument, from the dry logician who successfully defends the outworks, to the awakening preacher, who attacks corruption in its secret citadel, the heart. That the latter is more useful, and turns more to righteousness, who can doubt? yet we must not deny the usefulness of the other.

My sisters desire me to say a great many handsome things for them; I only say a *true* one when I assure you that I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obliged,

H. More.

CHAPTER VI.

DURING the summer of the year 1791, the sisters resided all together at Cowslip Green, and recognizing the hand of the Almighty in the success of their undertaking at Cheddar, they resolved upon attempting an extension of their benevolent efforts, by setting forward other schools in the neighbourhood. The difficulties they had to surmount, appear in a regular and simple journal kept at that time. Some of the opulent farmers to whom they applied in making their extensive rounds, received them with civility: but upon opening their business, assured them that the novelties they were introducing would be the ruin of agriculture. Others, more favourably disposed, told them that they had read something about Sunday Schools in the Bristol papers, and believed they might be very good things for keeping children from robbing their orchards. And upon the whole, as it was distinctly announced that no subscriptions would be called for, they were met by the farmers with less hostility than they had expected. Two mining villages at the top

of Mendip particularly attracted their attention. These were ignorant and depraved even beyond those of Cheddar,—so ignorant as to apprehend a design to make money by carrying off their children for slaves. The place was considered as so ferocious that no constable would venture there to execute his office; and these bold instructresses were warned by their friends that they were bringing their own lives into danger. They were not, however to be deterred by any consideration of personal hazard; and beginning to perceive who was helping them, by the solid improvement which was spreading around them, and particularly by an increasing attendance at church, they did not rest, till they had procured the same benefits for no less than ten parishes in a neighbourhood where there were no resident clergymen. Their first step upon entering each parish was to obtain from the incumbent of the living, his acquiescence in their interference; which was generally granted with alacrity; and in a short time the number of children under their instruction exceeded twelve hundred.

The distance to many of the schools was great; one of them was fifteen miles from their residence, so that they were obliged to sleep in the neighbourhood during the period of their visitation. It cannot be supposed that their own funds were adequate to such very enlarged undertakings; and it is due to their friends to observe, that they obtained a ready assistance from such of them as were in circumstances to afford it. Their evening readings, which consisted of a printed

prayer, a plain sermon (read always by one of the sisters when her health permitted,) and a Psalm, were found to be productive of effects the most strikingly beneficial. It seems that an adversary had endeavoured to give to the worthy rector of one of the most populous of these villages, an unfavourable impression of this part of their plan: but this gentleman, at his annual visit to the parish, having visited the school, talked with the mistress, and examined the children, found reason to commend and applaud the manner in which these readings were conducted, and to approve the books selected for the purpose.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

1791.

MY DEAR SIR,

Perhaps it is the best answer to your question, to describe the origin and progress of one of our schools as detached from the rest. And I select Cheddar, which you were the immediate cause of our taking up. After the discoveries made of the deplorable state of that place, my sister and I went and took a lodging at a little public-house there, to see what we could do, for we were utterly at a loss how to begin. We found more than two thousand people in the parish, almost all very poor; no gentry, a dozen wealthy farmers, hard, brutal, and ignorant. We visited them all, picking up at one house, (like fortune-tellers) the name and character of the next. We told them we intended to set up

a school for their poor. They did not like it. We assured them we did not desire a shilling from them, but wished for their concurrence, as we knew they could influence their workmen. One of the farmers seemed pleased and civil; he was rich, but covetous, a hard drinker, and his wife a woman of loose morals, but good natural sense; she became our friend, sooner than some of the decent and the formal, and let us a house, the only one in the parish that was vacant, at £7. per annum, with a good garden. Adjoining was a large ox-house; this we roofed and floored; and by putting in a couple of windows, it made a good school-room. While this was doing, we went to every house in the place, and found each a scene of the greatest ignorance and vice. We saw but one Bible in all the parish, and that was used to prop a flower-pot! No clergyman had resided in it for forty years. One rode over, from Wells, three miles, to preach once on a Sunday, but no weekly duty was done, or sick persons visited: and children were often buried without any funeral service. Eight people in the morning, and twenty in the afternoon, was thought a good congregation. We spent our whole time in getting at the characters of all the people, the employment, wages, and number of every family; and this we have done in our other nine parishes. On a fixed day, of which we gave notice in the church, all the women, with all their children above six years old, met us. We took an exact list from their account, and engaged one hundred and twenty to attend on the following Sunday.

A great many refused to send their children, unless we would pay them for it! and not a few refused, because they were not sure of my intentions, being apprehensive that at the end of seven years, if they attended so long, I should acquire a power over them, and send them beyond sea. I must have heard this myself in order to have believed that so much ignorance existed out of Africa. While this was going on, we had set every engine to work to find proper teachers. On this every thing depended. I had the happiness to find a woman of excellent natural sense, great knowledge of the human heart, activity, zeal, and uncommon piety. She had had a good fortune for one in middling life, but a wicked son had much reduced it. She had, however, still an estate of £40. a-year, or very nearly. She brought with her a daughter, twenty-five years old, quite equal to herself in all other points; in capacity superior.

It was winter, and we all met at the school on Sunday morning at nine o'clock, having invited many parents to be present at the opening. We had drawn up some rules, which were read; then some suitable portions of Scripture; part of the 34th Psalm; then a hymn sung; and then a prayer read, composed for the occasion.

For the first year, these excellent women had to struggle with every kind of opposition, so that they were frequently tempted to give up their laborious employ. They well entitled themselves to £30. per annum salary, and some little presents. We established a Weekly School of thirty girls, to learn

reading, sewing, knitting, and spinning. The latter, though I tried three sorts, and went myself to almost every clothing-town in the county, did not answer,—partly from the exactions of the manufacturer, and partly from its not suiting the genius of the place. They preferred knitting after the school hours on week-days. The mother or daughter visited the sick, chiefly with a view to their spiritual concerns; but we concealed the true motive at first; and in order to procure them access to the houses and hearts of the people, they were furnished, not only with medicine, but with a little money, which they administered with great prudence. They soon gained their confidence, read and prayed with them, and in all respects did just what a good clergyman does in other parishes.

At the end of a year we perceived that much ground had been gained among the poor; but the success was attended with no small persecution from the rich, though some of them grew more favourable. I now ventured to have a sermon read after school on a Sunday evening, inviting a few of the parents, and keeping the grown-up children; the sermons were of the most awakening sort, and soon produced a sensible effect. It was at first thought a very methodistical measure, and we got a few broken windows; but quiet perseverance, and the great prudence with which the zeal of our good mistresses was regulated, carried us through. Many reprobates were, by the blessing of God, awakened, and many swearers and sabbath-breakers reclaimed. The numbers both of young and old scholars increased,

and the daily life and conversation of many seemed to keep pace with their religious profession on the Sunday.

We now began to distribute Bibles, Prayer Books, and other good books, but never at random, and only to those who had given some evidence of their loving and deserving them. They are always made the reward of superior learning, or some other merit, as we can have no other proof that they will be read. Those who manifest the greatest diligence, get the books of most importance. During my absence in the winter, a great many will learn twenty or thirty chapters, psalms, and hymns. At the end of three years, during the winter the more serious of the parents began to attend on a Wednesday night; and on Tuesday nights, twenty or thirty young people of superior piety met at the school to read the Scriptures, and hear them explained.

Finding the wants and distresses of these poor people uncommonly great, (for their wages are but 1s. per day,) and fearing to abuse the bounty of my friends, by a too indiscriminate liberality, it occurred to me that I could make what I had to bestow go much further by instituting clubs, or societies for the women, as is done for men in other places. It was no small trouble to accomplish this; for though the subscription was only three half-pence a week, it was more than they could always raise; yet the object appeared so important, that I found it would be good economy privately to give widows and other very poor women money to pay their club. After combating many prejudices, we carried this

point, which we took care to involve in the general system, by making it subservient to the schools; the rules of the club restraining the women to such and such points of conduct respecting the schools. In some parishes we have one hundred and fifty poor women thus associated: you may guess who are the patronesses.

We have an anniversary feast of tea, and I get some of the clergy, and a few of the better sort of people to come to it. We wait on the women, who sit and enjoy their dignity. The journal and state of affairs is read after church; and we collect all the facts we can as to the conduct of the villagers; whether the church has been more attended, fewer or more frauds, less or more swearing, scolding, or sabbath-breaking. All this is produced for or against them, in battle array, in a little sort of sermon made up of praise, censure, and exhortation, as they may be found to have merited.

One rule is, that any girl bred in the school, who continues when grown up to attend its instructions, and has married in the past year with a fair character, is presented on this day with five shillings, a pair of white stockings, and a new Bible; and several very good girls have received this public testimony to their virtuous conduct. Out of this club, (to which we find it cheaper to contribute a few guineas, than to give at random,) a sick woman receives 3s. a week, 7s. 6d, for a lying-in, &c. &c.

We are now in our sixth year at Cheddar, and two hundred children and above two hundred old people constantly attend. God has blessed the

work beyond all my hopes. The farmer's wife, (our landlady,) is become one of the most eminent Christians I know; and though we had last year the great misfortune to lose our elder mistress, her truly christian death was made the means of confirming many in piety; and the daughter proceeds in the work with great ability. She has many teachers under her, who are paid 1s. a Sunday. Once a year each young person receives some articles of dress; but having so many other schools to run away with our money, we cannot do quite so much for any as I could wish. I should add, that we have about twenty young men, apprentices, servants, &c. who attend the whole Sunday with the humility of little children; and these, as they try hard to get a few clothes, we think it right to help with a small present. Amongst the collateral advantages resulting from the clubs, one is that the women who used to plead that they could not go to church, because they had no clothes, now come. The necessity of going to church in procession with us on the anniversary, raises an honest ambition to get something decent to wear, and the churches on Sunday are now filled with very clean-looking women. Perhaps a sketch of our expences may not be amiss; it is not quite accurate; I have no papers here.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
House Rent	7	0	0
Repairs, white washing, benches, &c.	2	0	0
Salary, head mistress	30	0	0
Under-teachers	10	0	0
Bibles, Prayers, and other books	10	0	0
Caps and tippets, 100 girls, &c.	8	0	0
Shoes and stockings for 80 girls, &c.	15	0	0
Shirts, 20 young men	5	0	0
Club subscriptions and expences	6	0	0
Incidental charities	6	0	0
	£99	0	0

Miss H. More to a Friend.

Bath, January 1, 1792.

MY DEAR MADAM,

May this year and many succeeding years open and close upon you with health, and peace, and comfort, and add both to your usefulness and your happiness. In looking back myself upon the past year, I see so much to be thankful for, that my heart is full of gratitude: and so much to be humbled for, that it is full of sorrow and self-abasement. The waters I think are doing me good, and I have been very much better since I came to close winter-quarters, owing, under God, to my being quite shut up: much as I love air and exercise, the loss of them is but a petty sacrifice to what many are called to make; and as I have no avocation at present which makes it a duty for me to run risks by going out, I am thankful to be furnished with so good a pretence for returning no visits; and also for the prospect of laying in a little health for future services; for I have partly pledged myself in my own mind, if I live and have health and money, and the French do not come, to take up two new parishes next spring; but as they are four miles below Cheddar, I have never dared reveal my intention to any one. I know sloth and self-love will say often, 'spare thyself,' and I feel the extreme concern it will give to those to whom I would wish to give nothing but pleasure; but I have *counted the cost*. These parishes are large and

populous; they are as dark as Africa, and I do not like the thought, that at the day of judgment, any set of people should be found to have perished through ignorance, who were within my possible reach, and only that I might have a little more ease. I will not say that I am not at times discouraged from this idea; for example, this last week, when with all my boasting I have been laid by with five or six days of nervous head-ache. As the waters evidently agree with me, I am trying to *compel* myself to the extravagance of chair-hire, without which I cannot drink them to any advantage.

As to myself, my days are sadly laid open to the inroads of all manner of invaders of time. As it is known I return no visits, I am therefore supposed to be always at home. *Now* a party comes recommended by some friend;—these must be seen for the friend's sake. Then come some old friends of my own. Now and then indeed there is a little chance of being useful, and I feel obliged to lend myself to the most distant claim of this sort. Of a few young ladies I have some sort of hope. But in general it is an unpleasant loss of time. I am sick of the turbulent politics of ignorant *politicians*; of rancour, violence, and misrepresentation.

This sort of unprofitable talk secularizes, unhinges, and discomposes my mind, because I see so much prejudice, and so little truth and candour on either side; yet all speak as confidently of things they know nothing about, as if they were in the cabinet. Bath, happy Bath, is as gay as if there were neither war, nor sin, nor misery in the world!

We run about all the morning lamenting the calamities of the times, anticipating our ruin, reprobating the taxes, and regretting the general dissipation; and every night we are running into every excess, to a degree unknown in calmer times. Yet it is the fashion to affect to be religious, and to show it by inveighing against the wickedness of France! I really know many who believe they are pious on no other ground.

Adieu, my dear Madam, I will finish with the Apostolic benediction: "May you grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Your's very affectionately,

H. More.

From the same to the same.

1792.

My dear Madam,

When I wrote to Mr. T. about setting up a new school, I did not at all know of the scenes which have since opened upon us. I then only meant a little scheme in Shaw's parish, which would not require a great deal of our personal attention; but if the *new* plan be put in practice, it will probably be the largest thing we have ever undertaken, and if it were *not* large, it would not be worth the great distance, difficulty, and expense attending it. I desired Mr. W. to communicate it to *you*. Now pray tell *him* that on Sunday we went down to reconnoitre, and if any thing ever *can* be done, it must be through the very fire. We had borrowed the

pulpit for a friend, but the opposition we met with so damped his sanguine spirits, that he had not courage to preach, because he said his indignation would make him imprudent, and his imprudence would make me angry. B——, however, had prepared a very judicious sermon. Patty and I, though not more convinced than he of human depravity as a doctrine, yet being longer accustomed to its practical effects, were hardly moved at all. The great man of the place, illiterate but very sensible, is a shrewd speculative *atheist*. The next, a farmer of £1000. a year, let us know that we should not come there to make his ploughmen wiser men than himself; he did not want saints, but workmen. His wife, who, though she cannot read, seems to understand the doctrine of philosophical necessity, said, 'the lower class were fated to be poor, and ignorant, and wicked; and that as wise as *we* were, we could not alter what was *decreed*.' To this the husband subjoined, 'Very true; besides he liked the parish very well as it was; if the young men *did* come and gamble before his house of a Sunday evening, when they might as well do it farther off, it was only for him to go out and swear at them, and they went away, and what could one desire more?' Before we went to church all these encouraging and ingenious things were conveyed to us; and during the prayers I took out my pencil and wrote across the church to B——, to be sure to mention in his sermon, that the *ladies* would defray all the *expences*—that they wanted nothing of the parish but their countenance; desiring that after

service the approvers of the institution would stay to give their support, and the enemies to propose their objections. This bright thought had a most happy effect. B—— repeated three times, that no *subscriptions* would be asked, and every heart was cheered, and every eye brightened. We had after sermon an hour or two of discussion in the church.

Poor Fry had been so shocked at such (to him) new instances of depravity, that he said not a word, but looked ready to faint. The opposers were, however, by this time so softened, that several actually got warm enough to declare they had *no objection* to the ladies coming; and one rich man clapped his hands, and declared he believed it would turn out a very good *job*. It was affecting in the mean time to see the poor stand trembling behind lest the project should fail.

The sun shines in at my window, but I dare not be tempted by its blandishments, I am still a close prisoner.

I thought to have sent a line to Mr. T. but I have done my *possible* in writing for to-day.

Monday afternoon.

Alas! the poor Africans. Grieved as I was at the loss of the question, I could not help laughing at Canning's speech, which really had a great deal of wit. As to Pitt, I could have hugged him, to borrow Patty's constant phrase when she is pleased with any body.

Our village of Shipham has suffered dreadfully from a raging fever—we lost seven in two days,

several of them our poor children. Figure to yourself such a visitation in a place where a single cup of broth cannot be obtained; for there is none to give, if it would save a life. I am ashamed of *my* comforts when I think of *their* wants; one widow, to whom we allow a little pension, burnt her only table for firing; another, one of her three chairs. I had the comfort, however, of knowing that poor Jones distributed what we sent most conscientiously, and ran the risk of walking into the pits with which the place abounds, and which were so covered by snow that he was near being lost. 'No words,' he wrote me, 'could describe the sensations of this poor village at seeing a waggon-load of coal we sent, enter the place!' I feel indignant to think that so small a sum can create such feelings, when one knows what sums one has wasted. Most providentially we had a most respectable mistress at the school, who entered so tenderly into their wants, that they would send to fetch her at midnight, and she supplied all the sick with broth, medicine, &c.

To the same.

Cowslip Green, 1792.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Patty has been very poorly indeed, but the weather for the last ten days has enabled us to prosecute our labours with more ease. I ought thankfully to acknowledge that, on the whole, our work is going on prosperously. Who does not clearly see

that the work is entirely God's own doing, when he is pleased to do it by such poor instruments? It seems a paradox, to say that we have more difficulty and anxiety now in this advanced stage of our progress, than we had six or seven years ago; and that we have most to do now in those parishes, where, by the blessing of God, we have seen the greatest improvement. But so it is. There is great delicacy required in the management of our young converts. Some of them are very sincere, devout, and holy in their lives, but now and then fall into a zeal so fiery, that it wants cooling; and then they relapse into dejection and sadness, on finding that earth is not heaven; and that they must submit to carry about with them human infirmity, and be still struggling against sin and temptation, as long as they live in this world. I have, however, the comfort to say, that hardly any of them have fallen back into sinful courses, and many, I trust, very many, are striving after excellence. It is curious to see the ignorant and undisciplined mind falling into the same errors, and deviating into the same eccentricities, with philosophers and divines. Some of our poor youths, who did not know their letters when we took them in hand, have fallen into some of the peculiarities of William Law, without ever having heard that there was such a man in the world; and I fear they judge unfavourably of my zeal, because I have refused to publish a severe edict against the sin *of wearing flowers;* which would be ridiculous enough in me who so passionately love them. I find

it necessary, in some instances, to encourage cheerfulness, as certain austerities are insisted on by some of them, which are rather of a serious nature.

The excellent young collier who was so cruelly maimed by the pit falling in upon him, I have been sadly puzzled what to do with. He has too good talents to be sent back to the pit, the damps of which also threatened him with insanity; so I have sent him to a good school, to add writing and arithmetic to his religious knowledge, and I hope to be able to set him up as a schoolmaster, for the sons of farmers and tradesmen on week-days, and for the poor people on Sundays; but he will be a good while upon hand, though he now walks twelve miles on Saturday nights, to assist at one of our schools.

One great object in our establishment of the poor women's clubs, has been to back with penal statutes, the religious instruction of the schools. This summer I have had the satisfaction of seeing the first dawn of hope on a subject of great difficulty and delicacy. My young women who were candidates for the bridal presents which I bestow on the virtuous, gravely refused to associate with one who had been guilty of immoral conduct; whereas it formerly used to afford matter for horrid laughter and disgusting levity. It was a very trying matter to me, for I thought it my duty at one of our late anniversaries, in presence of three hundred people, and half a dozen of the clergy, to deliver a solemn remonstrance on this very subject.

I did not think myself at liberty to be excused,

for it was a matter paramount to all misplaced delicacy, and I had the pleasure of witnessing the most becoming gravity and exact decorum in that part of my audience which I most feared, when I excluded from the pale of our establishment a female offender. It was a comfort that she had not been one of our disciples. No small difficulty then remained, to prevent the others from being vain of their virtue, and to convince them that though *she* had been singularly bad, there was nothing very meritorious in their goodness.

The worst of our business is, that having so many places, and all at a good distance from each other, to look after,—when all goes smoothly on in one place, something breaks out in another, and hinders the instruction of the children and parents. The teaching of the teachers is not the least part of the work; add to this, that having about thirty masters and mistresses, with under-teachers, one has continually to bear with the faults, the ignorance, the prejudices, humours, misfortunes, and *debts* of all those poor well-meaning people. I hope however that it teaches one forbearance, and it serves to put me in mind how much God has to bear with from me. I now and then comfort Patty in our journeys home at night, by saying that if we do these people no good, I hope we do some little good to ourselves.

I should not send such petty details to any one else, but as you are engaged in the same warfare, and will, I trust, be doing good, long after I am forgotten, I thought you might pick up some en-

couragement from knowing the difficulties which have been encountered by those who have trodden the same path before you.

I had a kind message for you from Lady —— lately, hoping she shall see you and Mr. —— late in the autumn; but you will hear from her first. I have had several letters from her, but have never sent her a single line; quite brutal this, for she has claims on my kindness, because she is not happy otherwise. I desire to have little to do with the great. I have devoted the remnant of my life to the poor, and those that have no helper; and if I can do them little good, I can at least sympathize with them, and I know it is some comfort for a forlorn creature to be able to say, 'there is somebody that cares for me.' That simple idea of being *cared for*, has always appeared to me a very cheering one. Besides this, the affection they have for me, is a strong engine with which to lift them to the love of higher things: and though I believe others work successfully by terror, yet kindness is the instrument with which God has enabled me to work. Alas! I might do more and better: pray for me that I may.

Your's, very affectionately,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Bath, 1792.

I think it right that you and Mr. W—— should know what a sad spirit sets these new Seceders at

work. You may depend on the truth of the inclosed. They do not now go so much to places which are in darkness and ignorance, as they once professed to do, but rather where the gospel is preached, in order to draw people away from the church. I begin to fear they will quite knock up our labours at Cheddar, but we must strive the harder. I leave you to judge whether they are wanted at that place. Poor D—— preaches most faithfully to them on Sundays, and gives them a lecture in the church on Tuesday evenings, all for £25. per annum. *We* have at school, a sermon on Sunday evening, with a more select meeting of the most serious on Wednesdays; add to this, that both D—— and our excellent Mrs T. at the school have their doors open at all seasons to the distressed or inquiring. The sectaries are more inflamed against me than the high church bigots; such an inconvenience is it to belong to no party, and so discreditable is moderation. A high-flier (a friend too) told me the other day, he would advise me to publish a short confession of my faith, as my attachment both to the religion and the government of the country had become questionable to many persons. I own I was rather glad to hear it, as I was afraid I had leaned too strongly to the other side, and had sometimes gone out of my way, to show on which side my bias lay.

I had not room in my letter to Mrs. —— to tell her a true story recently transacted in London. A lady gave a very great children's ball: at the upper end of the room, in an elevated place, was

dressed out a figure to represent *me*, with a large rod in my hand prepared to punish such naughty doings. Mrs. Holroyd has a letter from London describing this.

Ever your's sincerely,

H. MORE.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Bath, 1792.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I hope your mind is somewhat prepared for the sad news I have to impart to you. But your heart is so schooled and broken in to losses and afflictions, that I believe it is always in some degree of preparedness to receive them. You will too naturally conclude that this is a prelude to the closing scene of our beloved friend the Bishop of Norwich. He was so much better four or five days ago, as to be in the pump-room without his servant, and I was expecting every day that they would send for me to sit an evening with him, he being always out in a morning. But having neglected to send to inquire rather longer than usual, Patty called yesterday, and found him actually dying. He had just received the sacrament with his family, with extraordinary devotion; every word he uttered, every text he repeated, consisted of praise and the most devout thankfulness. He took leave of all separately, exhorted and blessed them. Patty begged to have a last look at him, which, as his eyes were shut, she could do without disturbing him. She

did not see the ladies, but had the comfort to hear that Mrs. Horne was extremely resigned and composed. This morning, at eight, she called again, and found that all was most happily over. She only saw his man, who told her that about two, I think, he calmly pronounced the words, 'Blessed Jesus!' stretched himself out and expired with the utmost tranquillity. She saw him again; which I intend to do, as a lesson of deep instruction. A more delightful or edifying death-bed cannot well be imagined. I wished to have been of some use to poor Mrs. Horne; but as the chaplain, Mrs. Selby, and her daughters, are all with her, I imagine she wants no assistance; only the maid Betty said she thought her mistress would be glad if I would write to Mrs. Kennicott. This I should naturally have done.

We *ought* to rejoice that he is released from a painful and burdensome body; and surely we *do* rejoice that his death was so consistent with his life, and that he honoured his Christian profession with his dying breath.

How wise and how witty, how pleasant and how good he was, we shall often remember. I, and indeed all of us, have been, for near three weeks, closely engaged in another triumphant death-bed scene, for such it *must* prove. You heard me speak, I think, of two young ladies of uncommon parts and piety, cousins to Mrs. Wilberforce, settled at Bath, quite alone in a lodging, of course wanting friendship and attention. One of these has been dying for these eighteen days past, to all appear-

ance: but in a manner more truly heroic and pious than any thing of the kind I ever witnessed. She talks of her departure constantly and with pleasure; and though, when in health, she was remarkably diffident and timid, she now exhorts, awakens, and instructs all who come near her; and tells them what a wretched state she should now be in, had she not a better righteousness than her own to trust to. I go to her in a chair every day, for I have never yet been free enough from a cough to walk out. It is a profitable attendance. Two such dying beds, so near each other, are not easy to be found.

The Bishop, I learn, is to be deposited at Eltham; the family, I suppose, will remove directly. You will doubtless hear from themselves.

Adieu. God bless you! May you and I be prepared!

Your's affectionately,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to a Friend. (Extract.)

1792.

I cannot forbear remarking to you and Mrs.——, what has lately so forcibly struck myself, I mean the transforming power of the Christian religion. It seems literally to have new-made the very tempers and constitutions of those who have lately fallen under my particular attention. Mrs. ——, the most dejected, humble, I had almost said helpless woman I ever knew, animated with this divine principle, seemed another creature; was active,

cheerful, useful, as long as her husband needed her services. Though the tenderest of wives, she revealed to him his danger, and supported him in his religious preparations, with a fortitude quite foreign to her natural character. She read hours on his coffin, and made me read the burial service to her.

Miss H——, shy, reserved, cold, and so hesitating in her natural manner, that few ever discovered, what a great intimacy enabled me to discover, a most accomplished mind, hid behind a thick veil of humility,—acquired in the near views of death and eternity, a sort of righteous courage, an animated manner, and a ready eloquence, which were all used as means for awakening and striking others. This extraordinary change was manifested in various ways during the eighteen days in which she was given over, but shone out with complete lustre the last night of her life.

It may be more profitable to consider the behaviour exhibited in her last hours, as the structure of her mind particularly exempted her from the charge of enthusiasm. There was little ardour in her temper; her affections were rather languid; and there was not an atom of fever in her complaint; so that her head was never more clear, nor her judgment more sound. When I expressed my concern that her sufferings were prolonged, she said she saw clearly the wisdom of that dispensation; for that if she had been taken away in the beginning of her illness, she should have wanted much of that purification she now felt, and of those clear and strong views which now supported her. She once

observed, that it was a strange situation to be an inhabitant of no world; for that she had done with this, and was not yet permitted to enter upon a better. In the night on which she died, she called us all about her, and with an energy and spirit quite unlike herself, she cried out with an animated tone—'Be witnesses, all of you, that I bear my dying testimony to my Christian profession. I am divinely supported, and have almost a foretaste of heaven: Oh! this is not pain but pleasure!' After this, she sunk into so profound a calm, that we thought her insensible. We were mistaken, however; for she had still speech enough to finish every favourite text I began: and, to shew how clear her intellects still were, when I mis-quoted, she set me right, though with a voice now scarcely intelligible. To perfect *her* faith, and to exercise *ours*, it pleased her heavenly Father to try her after this with one hour of suffering, as exquisite as ever human nature sustained; and I hope I shall never forget that when, in order to save myself the pang of seeing her unutterable agonies, I wrapped my face in the curtain, I heard her broken inarticulate voice repeatedly crying, "Let patience have its perfect work—Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him—Thy will be done." This, with a fervent ejaculation to be kept from temptation, and the powers of darkness, she repeated till her strength failed. Her prayer was heard; and her last hour was so peaceful, that we knew not when she sunk to her everlasting rest.

Two little things are worth recording, merely to

shew how consistent she was: for I am anxious to rescue such a death-bed from the imputation of enthusiastic fervours. She desired, if the physicians thought it might be useful for any future sufferer, that she might be opened; which was accordingly done. The other instance was, that early in the night, when I saw the pangs of death approaching, I had prevailed on her afflicted sister M—— to quit a scene she was so little able to bear: H—— begged to see her, and said she should like M—— to see her die. I represented to her how unfit her shattered nerves were to go through it; and that if she should fall into fits, what should I do with both? She was convinced in a moment, begged she might not come, and only desired I would explain to the woman that her sister was doing her duty by staying away; that she did it because it was right, and not because she liked it. I ought not to omit remarking, that the power of true Christianity has been no less conspicuous in Miss M——, whose humble submission to the divine will is the more valuable in one of her extreme susceptibility, and strong feelings: and that the parting is almost like that of soul and body; for Miss H—— was the mouth, and tongue, and organs, of which she was the informing spirit.

Extract from another letter on the same subject.

H—— has been dying since last night. I have held her clammy hand, and watched her still changing countenance all night. She is, at this time,

speechless; so to get over a few heavy moments, I will try to write to you. Perhaps I may not send it. As soon as the terrifying symptoms came on, I gave poor M—— her opiate, and put her to bed: thank God she is pretty quiet. The silence about me is solemn, but not terrible. I feel rather elevated that, while every one of my friends is, I hope, asleep in peace, I am ministering to these two sisters, going backwards and forwards from the dying to the mourning chamber. Instead of fearing that this last scene should be too affecting, I am only dreading (such is the levity of my nature) that it will depart from my memory before it has done its errand on my heart. Till the last hour I have been whispering into her dying ear all the promises I can recollect. She is pleased at it—takes every sentence out of my mouth, and finishes it with her inarticulate voice.

Four o'clock.—She has just had a moment of satisfaction more than human. Her pallid face was irradiated, and with a broken voice she declared she was almost in heaven. She blessed me rather with the compassionate energy of an angel, than with the weakness of an expiring creature, and said some things from which your letter just before received seemed to allow me to take comfort. I then asked her if she had a blessing to send to Mr. —— and yourself; with the utmost fervour she prayed for you both, and then for —— too.

Five o'Clock.—We have had a terrible hour. The mortal pangs are dreadful; my heart dies within me: I fear I cannot stand it: happily her

poor sister does not hear. Groans of agony beyond what my fears ever painted: and I have seen many dying beds. I go into the next room to spare myself a moment, and write to quiet myself. In the extremity of anguish she cries, "Thy will be done!"

Six o'clock.—She is alive, but the bitterness of death is past. All is peace; and my terrors have subsided, so far as to enable me to keep my post. I dreaded being driven to a cowardly desertion. One is puzzled why such a conflict of body and spirit was necessary for her, but I can only repeat her own words, "Thy will be done!" If she departs peacefully, I shall have cause enough for thankfulness.

Seven o'clock —She is departed peacefully; not a sigh.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bath, 1792.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I have brought home with me the broken-hearted sister of Miss Bird, whose eyes I have just closed, and who completed her pious course at six-and-twenty. Within a few hours, and not a hundred yards distant, died my much honoured friend, Dr. Horne, Bishop of Norwich, whose end was peace. His mind being a good deal hurt by his disorder, (water on the chest) he rambled much at intervals; but the instant any religious exercise was proposed, he was perfectly sound, composed, and

happy; his very rambling showed the habit of his mind; it was all praise and devotion. Mr. Hume perhaps would have excepted against his last words, which were, 'Blessed Jesus!' he then sunk to rest without a sigh. His pious and afflicted widow removed to our house, while the last sad ceremonies were performing, and stayed some days shut up in an apartment, where she scarcely saw any body but me, our other mourner being in another apartment.

As I contemplated the dead body of my beloved Bishop, which I did several times, I could not help reflecting, to what a mind it had belonged! so wise and so witty, so pleasant and so pious. I am thankful to providence for giving me the opportunity of being in the smallest degree instrumental to the comfort of these sufferers; I am not afraid that these scenes will affect me too much; my fear is, that the impression may escape before it has wrought its full benefit upon my soul. I know your goodness for me, my dear Madam, will make you glad to hear I was not the worse for these little exertions. Let me recommend to you a very little book, written by Mr. Cecil, called, 'A Visit to the House of Mourning,' as a very proper little tract to keep by one, to give away to friends under affliction. I have often been in want of such a thing, when asked to recommend something; and find this more suitable and less exceptionable than most others that have fallen in my way; the style too being rather elegant, will recommend the matter.'

I did not visit Madame de Sillery, alias Genlis. I was ill the whole time she was at Bath; and to say truth, the edge of my inclination towards her is much taken off. I have the same admiration of her talents, but very little veneration for her person: *et—l'un ne va pas loin sans l'autre.*

I have often cast a thought, but I begin now to cast an eye, towards my many pleasant and kind friends assembled together in London. I look forward to the pleasure of appearing among you in a week or two. May I then find you, my dear Madam, enjoying health and peace and comfort in all your dear and multiplied connexions. I congratulated you in heart and mind, though not with pen and ink, on the birth of a little Plantagenet. Adieu my dear Madam, ever affectionately

Your's,

H. M.

CHAPTER VII.

HANNAH MORE'S visits to London were now more contracted, as her time became more engrossed in the interesting occupations in which we have lately seen her engaged; and in addition to this busy train of constant employment in promoting the improvement of the younger part of society, she was called upon to make an extraordinary exertion to rescue an unfortunate young heiress who had been trepanned away from school at the age of fourteen. She was led, from circumstances, to take a deep interest in this tragic event, and in her efforts to discover the unhappy victim, she was often engaged in harassing and terrifying situations, (sometimes going about to search houses with armed Bow Street Officers,) to the great injury of her health and spirits. All efforts, however, proved fruitless, the poor girl having been betrayed into a marriage, and carried to the continent. Miss M. had considered this object of so much importance, as to sacrifice to it her time, her health, and the comforts of society, while there was any remaining hope of success. The following

letter gives an interesting account of this transaction.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

London, April 23, 1792.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Could you form the faintest idea of the life I have led, the scenes I have been engaged in, and the company I have kept since I came to town, you would cease to wonder at my unnatural silence. The day after I came, my sister, overcome with hurry and anxiety, fell alarmingly ill, in a miserable lodging, taken only for the day, to be near Bow Street. I had not only to sit up with, and nurse her, but the whole weight of this unhappy business fell on me, as an assistant to poor Miss M. My time has been literally past with thief-takers, officers of justice, and such pretty kind of people. I have made no visits, but snatched a hasty dinner in Cavendish Square, or at London House, in my dishabille, and away again, and this only two days ago; so long had I been in town without seeing those dear friends. Others I have not seen. I will give you a little sketch of the manner of life I have been engaged in. When we had information brought us of any house where our unhappy child and her atrocious companion were supposed to be, Miss M—— and I were obliged to go under pretence of wanting lodgings. One lawyer went with us into the house to look at the rooms, another stood at the door: a hackney coach full of Sir Sampson

Wright's men at a little distance: to these we were directed to make signals in case we had discovered the object of our pursuit; our share in the business being to identify the dear little girl; the lawyers with all their professional nonchalance coolly directing us to betray no emotion, nor to discover ourselves, in case we found them. You know, I believe, my silly terror of fire-arms—it is inexpressible. What therefore made these visits so particularly distressing to me, was the assurance that P—— never sat without a pistol on the table, which he seized at every noise. Every morning presents some fresh pursuit, and every day closes in disappointment. You may believe that nothing would justify these exertions on our part, but the deepest persuasion of the sweet child's innocence. It was the most timid, gentle, pious little thing! How far the endearments and flattery of a wretch who they say is specious, may have corrupted her in five weeks, I tremble to think; but though I shall mourn, I shall not repent. Diligent pursuit is now making after them in France. I cannot drop this subject without naming the noble exertions of my friend Mr. H. T——, whose zeal and piety has made him take it up as the cause of justice. His labours and influence have done more than all the lawyers: he got the King's proclamation, did every thing with the Secretary of State, and gave up every moment of his time which was not engaged in the other great cause, the abolition. Alas! we have lost that cause for the present.

I have hardly had an hour with Mrs. Garrick, but hope I shall soon. Tell Mr. Bryant he may venture to buy the Estimate. The truth is, though I am sorry to have it found out, I have never denied it when fairly asked. To affect secrecy about a thing that is known is absurd. I have never had time to see Cadell, nor do I know any thing about it. I hardly dare talk of engagements to Mrs. G. yet, as she has heard nothing of me; but I did hint to Mrs. Porteus, that I hoped to go to Fulham the last week in May. I mention this to you in a general way. I shall be sorry to have it later. The Mongewell friends too are very pressing for us. I know not what to say. I lead such a life of uncertainty, I fear to promise myself any thing.

I am, my dear friend,

Yours very affectionately,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to her sister.

London, 1792.

Do you know I am become quite an ancient: I do not mean an old woman, but an old author; a copy of Bishop Bonner's Ghost having been sold the other day at Dr. Lort's sale for half-a-guinea, on account of its scarceness. Poor De Lolme has called upon me. He is in prison, but got leave to come so far. I have lodged, from myself and others, five guineas in Elmsley's hands, which he is to give him one at a time, without hinting that they came through me. He is, I fear, inconsiderate and

forgetful of what becomes him; but so are some others, who yet have very good dinners to eat. I think it cruel that a foreigner, who has done so much honour to our country, by his book on 'The Constitution of England,' which has been repeatedly quoted in both houses of Parliament, should be suffered to starve. On Saturday we had a political dinner at Mrs. Hare's;[1] Sir Charles Blagden and I opposed the adversaries of government with might and main. All the rest I think were on the other side. No! poor Mrs. Carter sat speechless with rage, at hearing of the perfections of the French, and of the oppressions and grievances of the English. I am just called down; Lord and Lady Mendip being below. I think I ought to go out of respect to our mountains.

To the same.

London, 1792.

I could not go to Lord Fife's dinner, where I was invited to meet Messrs. Burke, Smelt, &c. My mind and time have been much engaged by a circumstance of which the story is too long for my short leisure; I will just give you a brief sketch.

I heard yesterday morning by a person who was an eye-witness, that a fine young creature had thrown herself into the canal in St. James's Park, in a masquerade dress. She was taken up for dead, but by the usual means recovered, and carried to

[1] Daughter of Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.

the Middlesex Hospital. Mrs. Clark[1] and I resolved immediately to set out and see what could be done; when we got there, we found she had just been carried in a hackney-coach to her lodgings in a street of very bad fame. Nothing intimidated, we followed her;—she came down to us looking deadly pale; her fine hair still drenched with the water; we told her we came as friends, and begged to know how we could serve her; she said her father had sold her at sixteen in the King's Bench, to a fellow-prisoner, after having given her a lady's education, which her language and manners confirmed;—that she was at present (to use their absurd term) under the *protection* of an officer of the Guards, to whom she was strongly attached;—that she had lately found he neglected her;—that he had gone the night before to the masquerade without her;—that suspecting this, she had followed him—that she had seen him there with another of her own sex; had fallen into fits, and made such an eclat, that he was obliged to go back with her to her lodging. Mrs. Clarke and I were so much affected by this story, that we staid some hours with her, offered to provide for her if she would abandon her present mode of life, and at last prevailed upon her to quit her present lodging; engaging to pay her debts. She consented in an agony of mind; but when we had got her away, and thought ourselves sure of her, she would return once more, for the chance of seeing her betrayer; protesting we should hear of her again next day,

[1] Mr. Wilberforce's sister, late Mrs. Stephens.

which we did not believe: she kept her word, however, and next night we again brought her off; but it was near one in the morning before we could safely deposit her. She is pretty, very sensible, and but eighteen; has much the manners and figure of a lady. We have put her in a lodging near us. Sunday we agreed to go to church at different times, not to leave our penitent too long to her sad reflections. We are by no means sure of her going on well, and shall not be surprised if she leaves us in a moment. We are, however, looking out for a permanent situation for her. I leave town for Kent to-morrow, to stay till next Monday. They all wish me not to go, on account of this poor girl, but I have promised to stay with her on my return, if needful.

From the same to the same.

Fulham Palace, 1792.

I suppose before this you are all settled down in the vale of cowslips. Our parties here have been almost every day spoiled by the business of both houses, which commonly takes off the flower of our company. This mischievous decision of trying evidence for the abolition below stairs, is very troublesome and perplexing to both friends and foes. There is no chance, or even possibility of getting through it this year. The Bishop of Lincoln and Mrs. Pretyman spent a little time with us, and were very agreeable. A certain great lord[1] has

[1] Lord Thurlow.

made it such a point to oppose Pitt in every thing, and obstruct all his plans, that the minister was obliged to tell the King he could not stay in, unless the other went out. The King was wise enough to know which to prefer. *We* abolitionists have an additional reason for rejoicing, as an enemy is abstracted from the cabinet, who will now only give his single vote like any other hard-hearted lord.

From the same to the same.

Fulham Palace, 1792.

I have only time to say that Harriet Lester, (the unhappy girl whose sad story I told you of,) took advantage of my absence to elope. She wrote a most clever letter, lamenting what she called her *fate*, but she could not *yet* resolve on a life of penitence. She desired me to write to her: I did so, and, while I lamented her criminal mode of life, told her, if ever it should please God to touch her heart with true penitence, to write to me, and I would still receive her.

Four years after, we find the following account of this individual.

A letter from Mary Bird informed me that poor Harriet Lester is quite in a fit of despair; her conscience so tortured that she is quite miserable, but yet declaring she fears she cannot give up her present connection, though she expects eternal perdition will be the consequence of her voluntary

wickedness. I have not read many things more eloquent or more affecting than her letters. Her present keeper, a great lawyer, has put infidel books into her hands; but she has considered all the arguments on both sides of the question in the deepest manner, and reasons surprisingly well on either side: she is very accomplished, understands music, drawing, fine works, and has a mind much cultivated. What a pity such a creature should not finally be preserved. I have still *some hope.*

In the course of this year, 1792, affairs began to wear a very gloomy and threatening aspect in this country. French revolutionary principles seemed to be spreading wide their mischievous influence. Indefatigable pains were taken, not only to agitate and mislead, but to corrupt and poison the minds of the populace, by every artifice that malice could suggest; and such had been the success of these efforts, and of the inflammatory publications by which they were carried on, that the perverted feelings and imaginations of men appeared to be propelling them fast into the same abyss into which the French had already fallen. At this crisis of consternation, letters poured in upon Hannah More by every post, from persons of eminence, earnestly calling upon her to produce some little popular tract, which might serve as a counteraction to those pernicious writings. The sound part of the community cast their eyes upon her as one who had shown an intimate knowledge of human nature, and had studied it successfully in all its varieties,

from the highest to the lowest classes, and the clear and lively style of whose writings had been found to be generally attractive. She declined the undertaking, being persuaded that no efforts of hers would avail to stem so mighty a torrent.

Still, however, after having publicly refused it, she felt it her duty to try her powers in secret, and, in a few hours composed the dialogue of 'Village Politics, by Will Chip.' But distrusting her ability to produce any thing efficacious on such a subject, she clandestinely sent it, by a friend, to Mr. Rivington; employing him instead of her regular publisher, Mr. Cadell, to avoid suspicion. She waited not long for the event, for, in three or four days, every post brought her from London a present of this admirable little tract, with urgent entreaties that she would use every possible means of disseminating it, as the strongest antidote that could be administered to the prevailing poison. It flew, with a rapidity which may appear incredible to those whose memories do not reach back to that period, into every part of the kingdom. Many thousands were sent by government to Scotland and Ireland. Numerous patriotic persons printed large editions of it at their own expense; and in London only, many hundred thousands were soon circulated.

Internal evidence betrayed the secret; and, when the truth came out, innumerable were the thanks and congratulations, which bore cordial testimony to the merit of a performance, by which the tact and intelligence of a single female had 'wielded at

will the fierce democratie of England,' and stemmed the tide of misguided opinion. Many persons of the soundest judgment went so far as to affirm that it had essentially contributed, under Providence, to prevent a revolution; so true was the touch and so masterly the delineation, which brought out, in all its relief and prominence, the ludicrous and monstrous cheat, whereby appetite, selfishness, and animal force, were attempted to be imposed upon us, under the form of liberty, equality, and imprescriptible right.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bath, 1793.

"Health and every blessing which the new year can bring to my most dear and honoured friend, the ci-devant Lady of Rosedale, but now, I trust, of warm and cheerful Audley Street.

As soon as I came to Bath, our dear Bishop of London came to me with a dismal countenance, and told me that I should repent it on my death-bed, if I, who knew so much of the habits and sentiments of the lower order of people, did not write some little thing tending to open their eyes under their present wild impressions of liberty and equality. It must be something level to their apprehensions, or it would be of no use. In an evil hour, against my will and my judgment, on one sick day, I scribbled a little pamphlet called '*Village Politics, by Will Chip*;' and the very next morning after I had first conceived the idea, I sent it off to Rivington,

changing my bookseller, in order the more surely to escape detection. It is as vulgar as heart can wish; but it is only designed for the most vulgar class of readers. I heartily hope I shall not be discovered; as it is a sort of writing repugnant to my nature; though indeed it is rather a question of *peace* than of *politics*. I did not send one to you, my dear madam, nor to any friend, as that generally furnishes a clue to discovery, which it was my object to avoid. Rivington sends me word that 'they go off very greatly, and that the purchasers are people of rank.' The very day the bishop came to me, Mrs. Montagu sent me a strong request on the same subject. Having relieved my conscience by owning my malefactions to you, my dear madam, I proceed to tell you that I know no more good of the author than of the book.

It is impossible to divert one's thoughts, one's talk, or one's pen long together from the horrors that have taken possession of every creature that has an atom of head or heart left. Yet I am afraid that even the bloody catastrophe of this deplorable tragedy has not filled up the measure of French iniquity. If ever one of their sixty-six monarchs deserved the appellation of *most Christian King*, surely it was the innocent Louis. When I used to weep for his calamities, little did I think I should ever have been benefited by his piety; or instructed and edified by his conduct and his compositions.

It is only in the *testament* of this murdered king, and in the *charge* you had the goodness to send me of the amiable Bishop of Leon, that my understand-

ing and my principles have been refreshed with a little ci-devant christianity and good sense. I had the pleasure of *bestowing* pleasure by making that charge *faire le tour de ce quartier*, which is a good deal inhabited by considerable Roman Catholics, Howards, &c. They met every day at mass, as soon as it was light, and hung their chapel with black.

My franking friends are so good as to send me down loads of papers, pamphlets, &c. as they come out: but I confess I have not had *nerves* enough to trust my eyes with the inspection of that horrible guillotine. I can *generalize* misery with as much comfort as another; but there is something in detail and actual representation which I cannot stand. But of all the things I have seen, none appear more seasonable, or seem likely to do more good than Bishop Watson's sermon, and especially his appendix, which he had the goodness to send me. The *date* of the sermon, before the question was agitated, adds to its value, and both coming from such a known assertor of liberty must open many eyes.

I enclose you a hasty sketch, excited by indignation on first reading Dupont's speech, some weeks since, which was sent me by the Bishop of London. It struck me that such poison should not be doled out to the English without some corrective. These dreadful subjects so run away with one, that I have neither room nor time to say more than that I hope you have quite lost that bad cold, and that those you most care about are well. Alas! must we go to war?

H. M.

Her pen, which had been so eminently successful in the service of her country, was not long suffered to lie idle, but was, after a very short interval, again employed in the cause of religion and humanity.

About this time appeared the famous atheistical speech of Dupont to the National Convention. Blasphemous as was this production, it did not want admirers in this country, and its ominous reception here, was the motive which engaged her active pen in a vigorous endeavour to repel the mischief. She was the more strongly stimulated to execute this design, by her wish to contribute towards the relief of the French emigrant clergy, (for whose sufferings she felt the deepest commiseration) a larger supply than her slender purse could afford. She made her present work, therefore, conducive to a double purpose, by dedicating the whole of its profits, amounting to about £240. to the fund raised for their relief. The thanks of the committee for the management of this fund were transmitted to Mrs. H. More by their chairman,[1] in a very handsome manner.

From Miss H. More to the Earl of Orford.

Bath, April, 1793.

MY DEAR LORD,

As I begin to hope, if my health continues to improve, that I shall have the happiness of thank-

[1] The late Mr. Wilmot, son of the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Eardley Wilmot.

ing you in person, early in April, for your most friendly and feeling letter, I would spare you the trouble of an answer, if I had not two or three words to say, which I cannot so well defer till that time. As paper cannot blush, I will proceed without apology, though I doubt if I could have the courage any other way to expose myself. Dupont's and Manvel's atheistical speeches have stuck in my throat all the winter, and I have been waiting for our bishops and our clergy to take some notice of them; but blasphemy and atheism have been allowed to become familiar to the minds of our common people, without any attempt being made to counteract the poison. The attempt I have presumed to make, I need not tell your lordship, is a very weak one, and I will tell you on what occasion I have presumed to make it. I happened to know of a good many of the religious people, both in the church and among the different sects, whose fondness for French politics entirely blinds them to the horrors of French impiety. They actually deny the existence of such principles among them; to such as these, therefore, chiefly, I have addressed a trumpery pamphlet, which Cadell is printing, and which, I suppose, will be out in a few days. He has been very dilatory about it, and sends me one solitary sheet a-week. But I have a further motive; the pressing distresses of the poor emigrant priests. I know how paltry is the little I can do, but my conscience tells me that that *little* ought to be done. The title is 'Remarks on the speech of Mr. Dupont,

made in the National Convention, on the subjects of religion and public education. Published for the relief of the Emigrant Priests.' It is really a poor thing, and for once I can truly say, I do not write for fame, but for shillings. I have not courage to put my name, for fear I should be thought pert and political, but I do not affect to make it a secret. All here is ruin and misery. Two banks broken at Bath: at Bristol things are worse, every hour presents me with some fresh instance of somebody I know undone! Adieu, my dear lord, believe me ever most gratefully and faithfully,

Your's,

H. M.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 14, 1793.

MY DEAR LORD,

I wish you joy of the true genuine summer we have had. The Bishop of London writes me word that only he and your Lordship were worthy of it, for that you were the only persons who did not huff the warm weather away. As I value your health, even more than your pleasure, it will be a real comfort to me to know that it has contributed to the former at least as much as I am assured, it has to the latter.

My little garden is now so sweetly green, that your French friends would abuse its *tristesse*. I was sorry I could not see *little* Strawberry in its

beautified state. We had a sort of scheme to take a peep at it, when I was at Fulham; but as we could not, at the same time, have taken a peep at you; and as we think that there are certain living creatures which warm the heart and please the eyes beyond all rural scenery, we did not go.

My heart and my imagination are saddened by the slaughter and devastation of my species, with which every newspaper is full. There are some terms, which, though commonly coupled together, appear to me so incongruous, that I hardly admit of their union, such as pious frauds, short war, bad peace, &c. These mad monkeys of the Convention do contrive to enliven my unappeasable indignation against them with occasional provocatives to mirth. How do you like the egregious inventions of the anniversary follies of the 10th of August? Before I have dried my eyes after weeping at the picture of the Queen carrying her little bundle into her narrow and squalid prison, I am compelled to '*exhibit a ghastly smile,*' at the idea of a warm bath solemnly marching in procession. I was going on, but I am too much in a rage.

I have had the honour of being presented with three very severe answers to my pamphlet against Dupont;—the first accused me of opposing God's vengeance against popery, by my wickedly wishing that the French priests should not be starved, when it was God's will that they should; the second undertakes the defence of Dupont, and justifies his principles; the third declares, that I am a favourer of the old popish massacres. I

can truly assure your lordship, that all three have not given me one minute's uneasiness. I was only sorry that so much reproof could not possibly do me any good. Had my adversaries accused me of almost anything but a fondness for bloodshed and popery, I think my conscience might, in some degree, have pleaded guilty, and I might have set about a serious reformation, the proper end of all repentance. However, all censure is profitable, for if one does not happen to deserve it for the thing in question, it makes one look into oneself; but my mind is of such a sort of make, that my chief danger lies not in abuse but in flattery: it is the slaver that kills, and not the bite. Yet let me not try to pass for better than I am; these hostilities do not happen to be *my* trials; it costs me but small effort to forgive these angry men. My feelings are excited by other objects than pamphlets, paragraphs, reviews, or magazines, written against me by people I do not know, and whose opinion makes no part of my happiness. But an unkind look, a severe word, or a cool letter from one of those very few persons who make up my world, would very painfully convince me that it is not a deadness or insensibility to the opinion of others that keeps me so quiet under certain provocations; that my patience is only partial; and that if the right, or rather the wrong string be touched, I have as much discord in me as any other. Can your lordship forgive all this egotism? I have been betrayed into it by my subject, and I am afraid it is so pleasant to talk

of oneself that one had almost rather talk of one's faults, than not talk of oneself at all.

I am, my dear lord, with unfeigned regard, your lordship's ever faithful,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Cowslip Green, Nov. 1793.

My dear Madam,

Though I do not know that it is in friendship, as in natural philosophy, where the attraction increases in proportion as the squares of the distances lessen; yet I am almost tempted to think, too, that geography has something to do with one's feelings; for though I must have left you quietly alone for some weeks after receiving your letter from Richmond, yet a letter from Badminton or Bath sets the heart and spirits in motion, and makes one feel, that being so near, it is a sad thing not to be nearer. I felt gratified that you had even been at the door of our Bath habitation; and if it had not been for the trouble of getting out of your coach, I wish you could have seen how very pretty that situation is; the best rooms looking down directly upon Spring Gardens, which have all the appearance of belonging to the house. I have generally the mortification of finding that this month brings to Bath some dear friend or other, whom it would much rejoice me to see; while the period I pass there seldom brings more than common acquaintance, who come in shoals from every point

of the compass. My more interesting friends, unless driven by actual illness, are always lodged in their winter quarters in town before I get to mine at Bath; to which place nothing but inability to stand the cold of this situation would ever drive me, for there is something in the genius of Bath which is opposed to my spirit and feelings. I was born for the country.

I have had a third attack sent me upon my pamphlet on Dupont, accusing *me of being a favourer of the old Popish massacres.* My mind is too much afflicted with the modern massacres to have leisure or disposition for the emotion of resentment against any but these. The enemies of God, of morality, of human nature—occupy one's thoughts and one's conversation almost too much; and while we exhaust upon them the indignation which their unparallelled crimes excite, we should never forget that we partake with them of the same corrupt nature; and that only religion and the restraining grace of God, preserve us from the same enormities. As to the poor queen, she comes out so white from the mock trial, that they seem madder than ever in publishing it. A few empty bottles, and an old hat, seem the heaviest part of the charge; and as to the accusation respecting her poor child, it is so diabolical, that if they had studied an invention on purpose to whitewash her from every charge, they could not have done it more effectually.

It has been no small support under the great labour of the Cheap Repository, that it has met with the warm protection of many excellent

persons, and has brought me to the acquaintance of many of the wise and good in very remote parts of the kingdom, who are anxiously catching at even the feeblest attempts to stem that headlong torren of vice, and that spirit of licentiousness and insurrection, which is threatening to undo us. They would have me to believe,—but I ought not to tell you, it savours so much of arrogance and egotism, (and I should tell it hardly to any one else,)—that a very formidable riot among the colliers in the neighbourhood of Bath, was happily prevented by the ballad of '*The Riot.*' The plan was thoroughly settled; they were resolved to work no more, but to attack first the mills, and then the gentry. A gentleman of large fortune got into their confidence, and a few hundreds were distributed and sung with the effect, as they say, mentioned above. It is a fresh proof by what weak instruments evils are now and then prevented. You will be so kind as to thank Mrs. Theobald for the subscriptions to Mr. Haggitt; and though I ought not to revert to the cheap publications, yet I wish her to know, that the object of the leading tract for the next month is the bad economy of the poor; and that I have been led to it by repeated applications in newspapers. I have endeavoured to show them that their distresses arise nearly as much from their own bad management as from the hardness of the times. It is called 'The Way to Plenty.' You, my dear Madam, will smile to see your friend figuring away in the new character of a cook, furnishing receipts for cheap dishes. It is not, indeed, a very brilliant career,

but I feel that the value of a thing lies so much more in its usefulness than its splendour, that I have a notion I should derive more gratification from being able to lower the price of bread than from having written the Iliad. But let me not forget to do homage to real talents, for which I still retain something of my ancient kindness. I therefore, wish it were in my power to offer ten subscriptions to Miss Burney, (I always forget her French name,) instead of one, for which I take the liberty to request the favour of your setting down my name; for I am too proud not to wish to stand in *your* books, as I told Mrs. Chapone, who wrote to me on this subject. I am delighted that you have generously undertaken to raise levies for this superior genius. I would not, I think, willingly be acquainted with that man or woman, who, being able to afford it, could withhold their guinea from such an author, and such a patroness. Her father, too, was a great friend of mine, and is, as Johnson told me, the only learned and accomplished musician we have had since Pepusch.

Adieu, dearest Madam,

I am most faithfully, and very gratefully,

Your obliged,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to her eldest sister.

Teston, 1793.

I was quite ill indeed while I stayed in town, and am very glad to get into this sweet place and pure

air. I am still poorly, not able to walk out, but go out in a carriage. I cannot say I made my London jaunt turn to any brilliant account in the way of pleasure, having never been out of the house but once. I saw Madame le Fite twice, in consequence of the inclosed, and took no small pains to draw her from her purpose; it was not much like a courtier, for I did not flatter her, but told her it was a foolish scheme; she then wished to bring it out in Holland, as the new principles prevailed much there; I combated that too, but I fear without success; she is also sending *Guillaume Shipe* there.

On Tuesday I sent £100. to the emigrant clergy, and next day Mr. Wilmot, chairman of the committee, made me a visit of thanks. He said he did not think the sum sent was a tithe of the money it had brought them in by means of the preface. He brought me from the Bishop of Leon, part of a translation of my pamphlet, which he has caused two of the priests to make, and asked my opinion about publishing it. I gave them as little encouragement as I did to Madame la Fite; I think it lost labour.

I was invited to dine in Portman Square with the chimney-sweepers on May-day, a feast I should have liked much, had I been well enough. Wednesday evening —— walked in, saying he had just come from making a long speech in the House of Commons about a halfpenny, and was then going to make another on the Sierra Leone business, so he called during the pause between the two, took a

dish of tea, and was off. Mary Bird came while he was there.

I suppose you hear very often from Miss Patty, quoth Sir Charles. Not one line, quoth I, to the best of my memory, since the day I left Bath.

I purpose staying here till towards the middle of the month, as I dread London. I shall not write again till I have more to say. Mrs. Bouverie sends many compliments.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Cowslip Green, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I wrote to my two afflicted countesses the instant I received your letter. Lady H——, though timid and frightened at the idea of a stranger, is, I hope, by this time, profiting from Mr. B——'s conversation. By return of post, I received a long letter, not from Lady Waldegrave, but from the Duchess of Gloucester, expressed in such terms of respect and kindness, that you would have thought I had been the Princess, and she the Cowslip Green woman. She is pleased to say she seizes this sad occasion to begin an acquaintance which she has long desired. She thankfully accepts my offer of coming to her broken-hearted daughter, and writes with a becoming submission to the divine will. Alas! she forms great hopes of the comfort Lady W—— will receive from *me*, and I feel so little equal to the work! I have put off my journey till near the end of this month. We have really just

now so much to do with our concerns, that Patty, who was at work many weeks by herself, before I came down, would be overwhelmed if I did not give her help at this time; and I thought a week or two would make little difference, as the object of my solicitude is not going to plunge into the world when her sorrow is subsided: had that been the case, I should have felt that not a moment was to be lost, but that the heart was to be hammered while it was soft and impressible. All things considered, I think it would be better that nature should have her first gush of anguish over. *Her* heart does not heal in a minute; she mourns her lord as she mourned him the first month. If any hints or books occur to you, you will strengthen my hands, for they are very weak.

Mr. B—— returns many thanks for his book; I think he is going on well, for he is dismissed from one of his curacies for being a methodist, by his unworthy rector, who last week treated forty, the poorest wretches he could find, to a shilling play, because B—— had preached against plays the Sunday before. This rector is our chief magistrate! Do we not stand in need of a little visit from the French?

My venerable friend, Sir J. Stonehouse, is preaching, on the verge of fourscore, with the vigour of five-and-twenty!

I know not where this will find you: flown from Battersea Rise, I suppose. Mrs. Clarke's letter was unusually cheerful, thank God!

Your's, my dear Sir, most thankfully,

H. More.

Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Cowslip Green, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I think you would have had a melancholy pleasure, had you passed yesterday with us; it was spent entirely in the new parish; the youngest child having (as is just) the largest share of the mother's care and pains. What gave a solemnity to our day, was, that several of the wretched parents of our poor disciples are in the county prison, and were to be tried for their lives the next day; so we were not obliged to invent subjects to touch our audience. It was upon a woman's being condemned to be hanged that we took up this parish this time twelvemonth.

Many of the young people are, I trust, already under very serious impressions. We have the school open every evening to persons of different descriptions, and, what I think would please you, several young day-labourers, when they come home late at night from harvest, so tired that they can hardly stand, will not go to rest their weary limbs, till they have been up to school for a chapter and a prayer.

One evening in the week some better sort of people,—farmers, attend. Among a little society of these we hope there are about twenty, including their wives, who begin earnestly to inquire "What they must do to be saved?"

The weather sadly impedes our operations, which

are mostly at a distance from home, so that I seldom escape a good wetting. I could not get on without my zealous colleague. When my heart faints and fails, I am afraid I take more refuge in the shortness of life, (which I labour to keep before my eyes) than in the prospect to which you so encouragingly direct my thoughts, and which cheered me a little.

If you see Mrs. Clarke soon, do say something affectionate for me. I hope she and I shall meet in a better world, for we do not seem to meet much in a bad one.

May God prosper your book, cordially prays.

Your's faithfully,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Cowslip Green, 1794.

I am too much affected, my dear Sir, with your very kind attention to my spiritual wants, to be quite silent. I can truly give you the only thanks you will think worth having, namely, that I believe and hope I shall be the better for it. You have hit on the disease, and I am persuaded have pointed out the only remedy. I know, too, that your authority will give weight to your suggestions, as my mind is, from its make, peculiarly liable to be acted upon by the hints and counsels of an able and discerning friend—more than from books—more than from meditation.

I thank God I feel somewhat less of this distress,

but I fear it is because my animal spirits are rather less depressed, and not because my heart is more right. I trust my faith is sound, but it is not lively; I have not a full and vigorous confidence in those promises, which I, however, fully believe; and I am sure there must be something amiss in my heart, which I do not know of, (though I know so much of its defects,) because I have little sensible joy. I do not, I think, *at all* lean on my own wretched performances; yet I have a coldness in doing, and a servile anxiety in omitting them. I have a stronger sense of sin, than of pardon and acceptance; though I have the firmest belief of both on the Gospel terms: but it is not an operative principle. Of my own sinful estate I do not lose sight, but God's mercy in Christ Jesus, though my acknowledged trust, I am obliged to *seek* for,—it does not, like the other, readily *present* itself; it is not an *ever-ready active* principle—but here I suspect my natural temper comes in; doubt and fear being my governing principles in common life. My very desire after that perfection, for which I trust I am labouring, proceeds too much from impatience and self-love. My right actions have but poor motives. I want the satisfactions of a perfect state, before I have got rid of the corruptions of a depraved nature.

I had set my heart on seeing Mrs. Clarke, and am sadly disappointed. Pray for me, dear Sir, that I may begin to set my heart on that one thing which will never disappoint.

I am truly your ever obliged,

H. More.

We find only one letter written by Miss Hannah More to her family, during a short absence in the year 1794, the greater part of that year having been dedicated to her schools, and other schemes of benevolence.

From H. More to her Sister.

London, 1794.

Last Saturday I dined with Mrs. Montagu. It was almost two years since I had found myself in such *grand monde*, so I told them if I should be caught doing any thing vulgar, they must give me a jog. We were fourteen at dinner, and many more were added afterwards, most of them my old and intimate friends, who seemed to receive me with great kindness. I told them to make much of me, for their opportunities of seeing such a rarity would be few. Mrs. Montagu is well, bright, and in full song, and had spread far and wide the fame of Cowslip Green, and the day she passed there. In the midst of all the splendour of lights, and grandeur, and luxury, word was brought in of the death of poor Lady E——. It was a tremendous warning; she was an amiable, generous, and charitable woman, but was immersed in luxury and splendour.

I went to Mrs. Boscawen, with whom I shall make a point to pass all the time I can spare. We have had many hours of quiet discussion. She is better, but is I fear breaking up.

Tell Mr. R—— I have just heard a good story of his French favourites. A poor woman had

planted some lucerne in her field, which it seems was not the grass quite native to the spot. She was guillotined, and no one could assign a reason for it, *que parce qu'elle avoit denaturé la terre.*

Remember me kindly to Lady Haddington. I am truly grieved at your account of her.

H. M.

The reader must have observed the rapid and unequivocal advancement of religious determination manifesting itself in the correspondence and communications of this humble scholar of the gospel about this period of her life; and will, if he feel an inspired relish for these disclosures of the work of the Spirit, be sensibly touched by the perusal of a portion of her journal, wherein the thoughts which have relation principally to the transactions of the year 1794, were laid up in their silent custody for her future help and direction. What has seemed to belong to the more private recesses of the bosom, with which no stranger should be allowed to intermeddle, I have thought it my duty reverently to suppress; but enough may be laid before the public to give to the portrait of her mind its full expression and character.

Sunday, Jan. 19, 1794.—Heard of the death of Mr. Gibbon the historian, the calumniator of the despised Nazarene, the derider of Christianity. Awful dispensation! He too was my acquaintance. Lord, I bless thee, considering how much infidel acquaintance I have had, that my soul never came

into their secret! How many souls have his writings polluted! Lord, preserve others from their contagion!

Sunday, Feb. 9.—This has been a hurrying week to me, in trying to raise money for the militia shoes; so much writing and talking, that there has been little leisure for reading—little disposition for communion with God.—When shall I gain more self-possession? when shall I be able to do business with the world, without catching the spirit of the world? Another friend dead, Richard Burke! witty, eloquent!—but how vain those talents without the one thing needful? I thank God that He has shewn me the vanity of genius, and given me a comparative deadness to reputation. Lord! do thou increase it, till I become quite mortified to the world. A fresh subject for praise this night—my dear friend Wilberforce carried one clause of the Slave Bill. Lord! hasten the time when true liberty, light, and knowledge, shall be diffused over the whole earth.

March 12.—Dined with friends at Mrs. ——. What doest thou here, Elijah? Felt too much pleased at the pleasure expressed by so many accomplished friends on seeing me again. Keep me from contagion!

Sunday, 23.—Had a comfortable religious day. I see the need of doing the duty of every day in its day; by not noting down the texts, I have forgotten them. When I look back on the past week, I see cause for mourning over my vanity and folly. Escaped from hurry, vexation, gaiety, and tempta-

tion, to peace, leisure, and retirement. Where I had planned much progress to my own mind,—I find a languor, a drowsiness, and deadness,—sloth and self-love getting strong dominion, and much time wasted which I had devoted to improvement. Let these continual discoveries make me humble. All has been peace and quiet without, and that has induced carelessness within—the calm of prosperity is not good for the soul.

Sunday, April 20.—Passed this week in hurry—neither read nor prayed with fervour.

Sunday, May 4.—Mr. Cecil,—on "the good shepherd who layeth down his life for the sheep;" —Oh! blessed Shepherd! receive me, thy erring and straying sheep, into thy fold!

May 6.—Came to Fulham to my dear Bishop—much kindness—literary and elegant society; but the habits of polished life, even of virtuous and pious people, are too relaxing. Much serious reading, but not a serious spirit; good health, with increased relaxation of mind; thus are the blessings of God turned against himself.

Sunday, July 13.—Went to Shipham and Cheddar —very full schools at each: had much comfort in the improvement of most, and the growing piety of many. We were both enabled to speak and instruct with spirit, and seemed to make an impression. Read a sermon to the aged. Came home very late and much tired, but I hope full of gratitude.

July 13.—Prayed with some comfort; but my mind was too much in other concerns. Have much business on my hands at this time; and though it is

all of a charitable and religious nature, (for I humbly design never to have any other,) yet still the details of it draw away my soul and thoughts from God. When shall I be purified?

Wednesday, July 23.—Gave our annual feast on Mendip to our poor children, near one thousand. Conjured by the Bishop to answer Paine's atheistical book, with a solemnity which made me grieve to refuse. Lord! do thou send abler defenders of thy holy cause! Heard of the death of Mr. W——, an awful death! Profane, worldly, unawakened, in the extremest old age!

Sunday, August 10.—Talked earnestly to sweet Mrs. F——;—gave her Witherspoon. Have read and conversed for many days with her and lady W——. Lord! enable me with equal prudence and zeal to labour to impress thy great doctrines on her heart, and at the same time let me in all humility copy her resignation. Heard of the death of young Burke. Lord! bless this heavy loss to his broken-hearted father. Oh! do thou now show him the vanity of ambition, and the worthlessness of the noblest talents, except as they are used to promote thy glory. Lord Chancellor Bathurst is gone, one of my oldest, kindest friends: I had very many obligations to him. How warnings multiply! this week I have not made the most of my time; vain thoughts and old besetting sins begin to resume their power. Lord! enable me to pray more, to struggle more, to live in closer communion with thee. Went to Sandford, Banwell school, and Church Shipham school. Patty read Walker on "If any man be

in Christ he is a new creature." A large and attentive audience. She laboured diligently; expounded scripture at four schools. She greatly eclipses me. Lord! be thou her exceeding great reward. Another month has now ended; before it closed, I heard of the death of ten old friends; *all* taken—*I* left—will nothing quicken my diligence?

September.—Confined this week with four days head-ache: an unprofitable time—thoughts wandering—little communion with God. I see by every fresh trial that the time of sickness is seldom the season for religious improvement. This great work should be done in health, or it will seldom be well done. Oh! for better preparation for sickness and death.

Sunday, September 14.—Cheddar—a very blessed day; between three and four hundred young and old; many seriously impressed. This has revived my hopes, that God will enable us to carry on this very extensive work, notwithstanding the heavy loss of our dear school-mistress. May we be deeply humbled under a sense of our own unworthiness for this work! May thy glory, and the good of souls, be our only end—*we are* nothing, *have* nothing, and of ourselves can *do* nothing.

Sunday, September 21.—Staid at home on account of the weather. Read and prayed with some degree of comfort, which was invaded by the reflection that we might have been doing good at the schools. For some days have found more comfort in prayer, more warmth and spirit; but still lamentably

defective—above all in *family prayer*. What is read by others makes little impression on me—not so in extemporary prayer. Yet I have a fear that it is novelty, or curiosity, that catches me. Lord, let my heart, and not my ear be seized upon!

Sunday, September 28.—Nailsea church and Yatton,—had a painful trying day. Much enmity against religious schemes—opposition, labour, and bodily fatigue! Yet what is this to what the Apostles and their blessed Master endured! Lord, strengthen my faith, enable me to have patience with these ignorant opposers of thy law. Encouraged by seeing many of our young men seriously affected; unwilling on that account to throw up this one school, which I think we should have done, had our motives been merely human.

When will my heart be a fit tabernacle for the Spirit of purity? Have lately had much communion with God in the night. I grow, I hope, more disposed to convert silence and solitude into seasons of prayer. I think also I fear death less. I am much tried by the temper of others. Lord, subdue my *own* evil tempers. Let me constantly think of him, "who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself."

Sunday, October 19.—Being hindered by heavy rains from visiting our schools, I resolve by thy grace to devote myself this day, O Lord! in an especial manner to thy service. I have seldom a Sabbath to spend on myself. Let me not trifle away this precious opportunity, but pass it in extraor-

dinary prayer, reading, and meditation. Enable me to make conversation one of my pious exercises.

I desire to remember with particular gratitude in my devotions, that on this day five years, my colleague and myself set up our first religious institution at Cheddar. Bless the Lord! O my soul, for the seed which was that day sown! Do thou daily turn more hearts from darkness to light, and preserve them from falling back again. O Lord! I desire to bless thy holy name for so many means of doing good, and that when I visit the poor, I am enabled to mitigate some of their miseries. I bless thee, that thou hast called me to this employment, which, in addition to many other advantages, contributes to keep my heart tender.

Sunday, November 9.—I have lately been negligent in self-examination. I resolve by thy grace to be more diligent. My faithful colleague has gone to our schools. I wish to acknowledge her superiority to myself in many principal parts of our joint concern, particularly in familiarizing Scripture to untutored minds.

Sunday, Nov. 16.—A fatiguing day—visited five schools—many difficulties surrounded me—Lord! increase our faith!—let the discoveries of faith be more clear, the desires of faith more strong, the dependencies of faith more firm and fixed, the dedications of faith more ardent and resolute, and the delights of faith more elevating and durable.

Sunday, Nov. 23.—Detained at home by a severe cough and head-ache. Grieved to find that when

I have this last complaint to a great degree, I have seldom any strong religious feelings. I would have hoped it is because its acuteness almost destroys the power of thinking; did I not feel, to my great sorrow, that my mind rambles through a thousand vain, trifling, and worldly thoughts, even sometimes in extremity of pain; but seldom sticks close to God and holy things. It seems a just punishment for my sinfulness, in having suffered my thoughts to roam too much in easier and happier hours, that I am deprived of the consolations of pious reflections in those moments of keen suffering, when nothing else can support the soul under the pains of the body. Lord, enable me to keep closer to thee at other times, and then I humbly trust thou wilt not desert me at these trying times. Enable me to fix my thoughts more intensely, more frequently, on death and dying scenes.

Dec. 15.—Went to Bath. I have now entered a new scene of life. O Lord! fit me for the duties and keep me from all the temptations of it. I thank thee that the vain and unprofitable company with which this place abounds, is a burden to me. Give me a holy discretion on the one hand, and zeal not to be drawn off from better practices on the other. As my conversation will be less useful, let me be careful that my thoughts are more holy, and that I look more after the state of my heart. Give me a submissive spirit to bear all the wounding words I may be obliged to hear against religion. And do thou remove those prejudices which obstruct the growth of some of my friends in divine things.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE institution of Sunday Schools, which originated with the benevolent Mr. Raikes, had enabled multitudes of the lower classes to read; and no one more rejoiced at this improvement of their condition, nor, to the extent of her power, more laboriously contributed to it than Mrs. H. More. But she began to fear that without some extraordinary efforts their very advantages might become a source of much evil. The multiplication of mischievous tracts, which were dispersed with incredible industry, called aloud for some permanent antidote. To teach the poor to read, she now saw, was putting a dangerous engine into their hands, unless safe and salutary reading was also provided. The friends of insurrection, infidelity and vice, carried their exertions so far as to load asses with their pernicious pamphlets, and to get them dropped, not only in cottages, and in high-ways, but into mines and coal-pits.

The success of 'Village Politics' encouraged her

to venture on a more extensive undertaking. This was to produce regularly every month, three tracts, consisting of stories, ballads, and Sunday readings, written in a lively and popular manner. By these means she hoped to circulate religious knowledge as well as innocent entertainment, and to counteract the poison which was continually flowing through the channels of corruption.

When she considered the multitudes whose sole reading was limited to those vicious performances; and that the temptation was obtruded upon them in the streets, or invitingly hung out upon the walls, or from the windows, she thought the evil was so diffused as to justify her in employing such remedial methods as were likely to become effectual by their simplicity and brevity, and their accommodation to vulgar minds.

As the school of Paine had been labouring to undermine, not only religious establishments, but good government, by the alluring vehicles of novels, stories, and songs, she thought it right to encounter them with their own weapons,; and having observed that to bring dignities into contempt, and to render the clerical character odious, was a favourite object with the enemy, her aim was to oppose it in the way that seemed most likely to defeat the mischief. She therefore scarcely ever produced a tract in which it was not a part of her plan to introduce an exemplary parish priest.

As she proposed to undersell the trash she meant to oppose, she found that the expence would prevent the possibility of her carrying on the scheme with-

out a subscription, and she no sooner published proposals of her plan, than it was warmly taken up by the wisest and best characters in the country.

The success surpassed her most sanguine expectations. Two millions of these publications were sold in the first year—a circumstance perhaps new in the annals of printing. The exertion it required to organize the plan,—to produce, or to procure from others (for two or three friends and one of her sisters occasionally assisted her) three tracts every month, for three years,—and to keep up a correspondence with the various committees formed in almost every part of the kingdom,—materially undermined her health; nor was this the only sacrifice she made to her country and to humanity; she devoted to these labours that time which she might have employed in writings that would have greatly increased her yearly income—an increase which her large disbursements for her schools must have rendered expedient. Perceiving that her tracts had not only made their way into kitchens and nurseries, but even into drawing rooms, she at length judged it expedient to have them handsomely printed in three volumes.

From Mrs. H. More to the Rev. John Newton.

Bath, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hope Mr. Grant has communicated to you something of the inclosed plan. I thought I had counted the cost before I began, but I find the labour very

great; and here lies one of my difficulties. The religious poor, whether in the church, or among Methodists or Dissenters, little need this sort of help; it is the profligate multitude that require to be drawn off from that pernicious trash, the corruption of which is incalculable. I have, therefore, thought it lawful to write a few moral stories, the main circumstances of which have occurred within my own knowledge, but altered and improved as I thought would best advance my plan, carefully observing to found all goodness on religious principle. Some strict people, perhaps, will think that invention should have been entirely excluded; but, alas? I know with whom I have to deal, and I hope I may thus allure these thoughtless creatures on to higher things. Add to this, my great and *worldly* friends are terribly afraid I shall be too methodistical, (a term now applied to all vital Christianity,) and will watch me so narrowly, that it will require more prudence than some of my *religious* friends would think it right to employ.

Will you allow me to make extracts from your good woman's diary for a penny paper? or, perhaps, you might have the goodness at your leisure to do it yourself; or to send me a hymn, or any thing that would suit.

Love to Miss Catlett. Having a hundred letters to write, I can only say that I am,

Yours faithfully,

H. More.

The following letters were addressed to her sister about this period; they all bear date, '*London*, 1795.'

I forgot to tell you one thing which diverted me vastly. When the proposals for the tracts was shewn to the Duke of ——, he said that though he admired the scheme exceedingly, and had a high respect for me, he should not subscribe, because he took it for granted, knowing the character of the lady, that all the doctrines would be on one side. I desired my friend to tell his grace that they certainly would! I wonder if I shall ever have time again to sit down and write a quiet orderly letter:—I have always so many things to say, and never any time to say them. The Repository Tracts engage my whole thoughts. I have written a new ballad called the 'Newcastle Collier,' with which the Bishop of Durham is much pleased. Newcastle is in his diocese, and he hopes to spread the plan much there. We had Lord and Lady Harcourt, and a number of such-like fine people to-day at dinner.

My compliments to the poor emigrant priests who are so much with you: do not tell them that the French nobles and bishops now in this country are mentioned with dislike by some of our high people. My constant answer is, 'You should have found out their vices before they wanted a dinner; they had no sins when they were able to give you magnificent fêtes in their own country. Our bounties are not meant to reward their virtues, but to supply their

necessities.' I went to London House yesterday and found the Bishop with his table full of our penny literature.

Mr. Mason has sent me half a dozen ballads for the Repository. I was obliged to reject three, because they had too much of politics, and another because there was too much of love. But two, one of which was called the 'Ploughboy's Dream,' will do very well. I know not what so great a man will say at having any of his offerings rejected. The Bishop has written him word that I am very nice, and hard to please, so that he must not wonder if I do not take every thing *even* of *his*. Two highly respectable Committees are formed, one in the city, and the other in Westminster, members of parliament, &c. for the regular circulation of our Repository Tracts. The Bishop of Dromore has been with me, to put me on a good plan about hawkers. The Bishop of London received the enclosed note to-day from the Archbishop of Canterbury; it would make Sally, who has such a veneration for dignitaries and cathedrals, smile to see how much the heads of the church condescend to deal in our small wares.

I found two very agreeable presents last night waiting my arrival. The works of Soame Jenyns, from the editor, my good friend Mr. Cole; and Mr. Bryant's new work, magnificently bound in morocco —a present from the learned and pious author, with a letter friendly and flattering to the last degree. I observe every year an increase of piety in this

good man. Tell Patty I have a present, too, for her memorandum book, a piece of laurel gathered at Virgil's tomb, thirty years ago.

I have been writing a ballad for the 'Cheap Repository,' called 'Turn the Carpet.' The object of it is to vindicate the justice of God in the apparently unequal distribution of good in this world, by pointing to another. I shewed it to the Bishop, who laughing said—'Here you have Bishop Butler's Analogy, all for a halfpenny.' I have been so ill, that my friends have sent Dr. Warren to me. He is a most agreeable, as well as able man; pays me every attention, but will never take a fee. This is uniformly the case whatever physician I consult, and I have consulted all that are eminent. I have surely reason to speak highly of the liberality of the profession.

I paid my visit to Gloucester House yesterday. Lady Waldegrave presented me to the Duchess. We had two hours of solid, rational, religious conversation. It would be too little to say, that the Duchess's behaviour is gracious in the extreme. She behaved to me with the affectionate familiarity of an equal; and though I took the opportunity of saying stronger things of a religious kind than perhaps she had ever heard, she bore it better than any great person I ever conversed with, and seemed not offended at the strictness of the gospel. I was resolved to preserve the simplicity of my own character, and conversed with the greatest ease. It was Thursday, the great court day on the royal

marriage. The Duchess presented me to Princess Sophia, and Prince William.

The manners of these two young personages were very agreeable. They found many kind things to say to me, and conversed with the greatest sweetness and familiarity. I strongly recommended Mr. Gisborne's book. The Duchess quoted the 'Shepherd of Salisbury Plain' two or three times, and told me of a little adventure she had had. She desired Lady Mary Mordaunt (one of her ladies of the bed-chamber) to stop an orange-woman and ask her, if she ever sold ballads? 'No! indeed,' said the woman, 'I don't do any thing so mean, I don't even sell *apples!*' This diverted them, as they did not know there were so many ranks and gradations in life. With some difficulty, however, they prevailed on her to condescend to sell some of our little books, and in a few hours she came back, shewing them two shillings she had cleared by her new trade.

Lord Orford rallied me yesterday, for what he called the ill-natured strictness of my tracts; and talked foolishly enough of the cruelty of making the poor spend so much time in reading books, and depriving them of their pleasure on Sundays. In return, I recommended him and the ladies present, to read 'Law's Serious Call.' I told them it was a book that their favourite Mr. Gibbon had highly praised; and, moreover, that Law had been Gibbon's tutor early in life. Both are true, but was there ever such a contrast between preceptor and pupil? They have, however, promised

to read it; and I know they will be less afraid of Gibbon's recommendation than of mine.

Poor Lord Orford has been very seriously ill, and is far from recovered. I was told that, as he lay on his bed, he cried out, 'I wish I had not scolded poor Hannah More, for being so religious! I hope she forgives me.' So I sent him word that I forgave him, and would pray for him.

My kind friend, Mrs. Garrick, is very angry that I so much curtail my visits to her, but I feel that I have no right to steal time from occupations by which I hope I may be made an instrument of some little usefulness.

Coulthurst tells me it was a famous speech that Mr. Wilberforce made at York about the Sedition Bills, which has established his own popularity, and the cause of government in that county. Mrs. Kennicott is here, and Mr. Jacob Bryant is expected. We dined yesterday at Chelsea, at Lord Cremorne's. To-day we visit Mr. Ormerod, at his new residence at Kensington.

Since writing the above, Lady Euston has been here to spend the morning. She tells me that her lord and Pitt were returned yesterday for Cambridge. I suppose Sally is quite wild at the budget. Such national wealth! Such a minister! £600,000. in the treasury; and then he thanks *Divine Providence*, too, for the flourishing state of the nation! I hope this view of the nation's dependence will open more and more upon him.

No one can duly appreciate the worth and agree-

ableness of the delightful owners of this house, who have not, like me, had the privilege of being an inmate, for some weeks, every year. Mrs. Porteus always puts me in mind of an expression of Sir Philip Sidney; her whole demeanour and conduct is the 'measure of propriety.' I never knew a woman more discreet and judicious, or who more properly selected topics for conversation. As to the Bishop, his life is a tissue of good actions. His industry is incredible; he still rises at five, and the end of one useful employment is only the beginning of another. His mind is always alive when any project of public good or private benevolence is on foot. His sweetness of temper, his playful wit, his innocent cheerfulness, embellish and delight our little society. My visits here are rendered perfectly agreeable, now that I am so little in town, by their kindness in inviting my particular friends to meet me here.

Lord Orford has presented me with Bishop Wilson's edition of the Bible, in three vols. quarto, superbly bound in morocco, (oh! that he would himself study this blessed book), to which in a most flattering inscription he attributes my having done far more good than is true. Alas! when I receive these undue compliments, I am ready to answer with my old friend Johnson—'Sir, I am a miserable sinner!'

A little previous to this time, Hannah More received from her sister Martha, who was vigorously engaged in the instruction and superintendence

of their schools, an account of the funeral of one of the school-mistresses whom they had for some years employed. It affords at once such a proof of providential direction in the choice of the teachers they engaged, and of the respect which sincere piety and useful talents may procure to those who are in very humble life, that I think its intrinsic worth will justify its insertion. It deserves a place, too, as a specimen of the fervent spirit and simple piety of the warm-hearted writer; a woman whose frame was the weak and languid vehicle of a strong and noble mind, directing its affections first to her God and Saviour, and then expanding them over the whole human race in labours of love.

From Martha to Hannah More.

August 18, 1795.

I took my letter yesterday to finish it at Cheddar; but, alas! hurry, grief, and agitation, render it almost impossible for me to write a word; however, I will endeavour to convey to you, that we have just deposited the remains of our excellent Mrs. Baber, to mingle with her kindred dust. Who else has ever been so attended, so followed to the grave? Of the hundreds who were assembled, all had some token of mourning in their dress. All the black gowns in the village were exhibited, and those who had none, had *some* broad, *some* little bits of narrow black ribbon, such as their few spare pence could provide. The house, the garden, and place before the door was full. But how shall I describe

it—not one single voice or step was heard—their very silence was dreadful;—it was not the least affecting part to see their poor little ragged pocket-handkerchiefs, not half sufficient to dry their tears;—some had none, and those tears that did not fall to the ground, they wiped off with some part of their dress. When the procession moved off, Mr. Boak, who was so good as to come to the very house, preceded the corpse, with his hat-band and gown on, which, as being unusual, added somewhat to the scene;—then the *body*;—then her sister and myself as chief mourners; a presumptuous title amidst such a weeping multitude—then the gentry two and two—next, her children, near two hundred—then all the parish in the same order—and though the stones were rugged, you did not hear one single footstep.

When we came to the outer gate of the church-yard, where all the people used to wait to pay their duty to her by bows and courtesies, we were obliged to halt, for Mr. Boak to go in and get his surplice on, to receive the corpse with the usual texts. This was almost too much for every creature, and Mr. Boak's voice was nearly lost; when he came to 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' he could scarcely *utter* it; but to *feel* it, was a better thing. On our entrance into the church, the little remaining sight we had left discovered to us that it was almost full. How we were to be disposed of, I could not tell. I took my old seat with the children, and close by her place. Mr. Boak gave us a discourse of thirty-five minutes

entirely upon the subject. His text was from St. John, "Where I am, there shall also my servant be." He said he chose it, because it was the last she had made use of to him, (I was sitting on her bed at the same time,)—he added, she looked round her, and observed 'it was comfortable to have kind friends, but much better to have God with one.' His sermon was affecting and bold: as a proof of the latter, though Mr. —— the Vicar was there, and he himself was Curate, he said with an emphasis in his voice, and a firmness in his look, 'This eminent Christian first taught *salvation* in Cheddar.' He spoke of Betsy in high terms, besought all to look to her, and very sweetly put up a prayer, that a double portion of the mother's spirit might descend upon the daughter. He was very tender in his address to the children, exceedingly solemn in that to the young men and women, and concluded with a fervent and suitable prayer.

When we drew near to the grave, and the last solemn rite was performed, and 'ashes to ashes, dust to dust' was pronounced, every body threw in their nosegays. I was almost choked. When Robert Reeves, John Marshall, and the six favourites let down the coffin: they stood over it in an attitude never to be described, and exhibited a grief never to be forgotten. They feared at one time Mr. Gilling must have been taken out of the church. If you could for a moment doubt my account, I would add, that the undertaker from Bristol wept like a child, and confessed, that without emolument, it was worth going a hundred miles to see such a sight. I

forgot to mention, the children sobbed a suitable hymn over the grave. There was no boisterous hysterical grief, for the departed had taught them how to select suitable texts for such occasions, and when to apply the promises of Scripture, but I think almost tears enough were shed to lay the dust. We returned as we went, save that we had left this "mother in Israel" behind. When we got the children into the great room, and missed her lively sprightly figure and movements, every heart sunk.

I said a great deal to them all, as well as I could, and wrung their little hearts; for I knew but too well, that the world and young blood would make an excellent sponge to wipe out, full soon, the awful lessons of that day. My rough nature generally directs me rather to *probe* than *heal* a wound: the natural man loves to patch, but the new piece will tear the old garment. Mr. Boak was very kind, and assisted me a good deal in talking to them; and said all now hung upon their own good conduct, whether the school should be continued or not, but he hoped we should try it at least a twelvemonth. Excellent laborious Betsy has hitherto all her life been an indefatigable slave. She will now suddenly be called into great power, and Satan, I presume, will be more active about her than ever; therefore the truest tenderness will be, to keep a tight rein ourselves, and let her out gradually; as we have not that exalted opinion of the dignity of human nature which some gentlemen and ladies have. I have promised to go next Sunday to open

the school, and talk to the people, if I am able. I think I shall go on horseback. Mrs. Baber seemed for the last six months to have been particularly preparing for death. She had been very bilious, and slept but little. Betsy would speak, and inquire how she did? her answer was, I lie awake, and in pain, but eternity is revealed to me in a manner I cannot, dare not tell! She had ceased speaking to the people after the sermon for some time, and made Betsy do all the *important* parts of the business; the *laborious* part she always did.

I should have thought it no crime to have given a considerable sum to have had you, Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Thornton present. Perhaps such a sight has seldom been exhibited. Oh, that the rich and great would so live as to be so mourned! So passeth this world away, and so we go on sinning, and take no warning. Never, never had I such a difficulty to restrain my tongue, as at the moment the last office was performed: the people! the children! the solemnity of the whole! the spirit within seemed struggling to speak; and I was in a sort of agony, but I recollected that I had heard somewhere a woman must not speak in the church. Oh! had she been interred in the church-yard, a messenger from Mr. Pitt should not have restrained me, for I seemed to have received a message from a higher master within; and I have long been convinced that Satan is as often dressed in the garb of prudence as in any other, and as often succeeds in it. How many pious people prayed for her; Mr. Serle too! yet all did not prevail. She seemed indeed to

have done her work. I am sure, Mr. Newton especially, will lament her, because he had seen her so often. How this Cheddar work will now go on, no human being can tell; but of this we are certain, it is in the same *hands* now that it was before.

MARTHA MORE.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Cowslip Green, Oct. 14, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I should not trouble you so soon with a line in answer to yours, if it were not to save you more trouble. I take very kindly your friendly sympathy and attention, in proposing to look out for an assistant to us in our operations, but I write on purpose to beg you not to think of it. An ordinary person would be of no use; one of a superior cast, who might be able to enter into our views and further them, would occasion an expence equal to the support of one or two more schools. At present we rub on pretty well. It will be time enough to think of your scheme when I am quite laid by. This hot weather makes me suffer terribly, yet I have now and then a good day, and on Sunday was enabled to open the school. It was an affecting sight. Several of the grown-up youths had been tried at the last assizes: three were the children of a person lately condemned to be hanged;—many thieves! all ignorant, profane, and vicious beyond belief! Of this banditti we have enlisted one hundred and

seventy; and when the clergyman, a hard man, who is also a magistrate, saw these creatures kneeling round us, whom he had seldom seen but to commit or punish in some way, he burst into tears. I can do them little good, I fear, but the grace of God can do all. Your friend, Henry Thornton thought we ought to try.

I have just had a letter from the Bishop of London, expressing the most gloomy apprehensions as to our public prospects. Captain Bedford writes me there is scarcely an officer in the fleet who does not reprobate the Quiberon attempt, and all subsequent attempts on the coast.

Yours, dear Sir,
Most sincerely,
HANNAH MORE.

P. S. Have you never found your mind, when it has been weak, now and then touched and raised by some very trifling circumstance? So I felt on Sunday. The principal people from many parishes came to the opening of this scheme for the instruction of this place, which is considered a sort of Botany Bay. Some musical gentlemen, drawn from a distance by curiosity (just as I was coming out of church with my ragged regiment, much depressed to think how little good I could do them) quite unexpectedly struck up that beautiful and animating anthem, "Inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these, you have done it unto me." It was well performed and had a striking effect.

Mrs. H. More to a Friend.

Cowslip Green, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I will answer your question, "whether I think it is or is not your duty to indulge the gaiety of your temper among strangers?" with the plainest sincerity and truth, according to my judgment. I have no doubt that it is a part of Christianity to convert every natural talent to a religious use, and, therefore, I declare I think you are serving God by making yourself agreeable, upon your own views and principles (for the motive is the act,) to worldly but well-disposed people, who would never be attracted to religion by grave and severe divines, even if such ever fell in their way. Those who can adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour by cheerful manners, defeat the end of the Giver by assuming a contrary character. It is an honest bait by which they will at last be attracted to like you for some better part of you. I do not mean that their liking *you* much signifies, except in so far as, through your medium, they be brought to relish religion. How many have been induced to read Cowper's 'Task,' by 'John Gilpin,'—'Pascal's Thoughts' by his 'Provincial Letters,'—and Doddridge's Works by his Letters. By the bye, Doddridge is a case in point—I have heard Sir James Stonehouse say he never knew a man of so gay a temper as Doddridge. One great use that may follow your carrying this cheerfulness into worldly

company is this—if they have sense and reflection, they will discern what sacrifices you must make, and what conquests religion enables you to achieve over yourself, when they find that gaiety does not seduce you from the rigour of your principles, and the severity of your morality. They will find out that you are not driven to religion because you have no taste for that wit and elegance which they rate so highly; and that your nonconformity to the world does not spring from your having no taste for its enjoyments, but because you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Dead and buried as they are in luxury and indulgence, it is only by such casual discoveries as these that they can ever get the smallest glimpse of the meaning of "plucking out right eyes, and cutting off right hands." To such people, religion must be made as it were tangible, palatable, visible; else they are apt to think it but an idle speculation.

On the other hand, I have told Lady S. that there is this danger attending the society of religious people who are gay and pleasant—that it is apt to indispose worldly minds towards other religious persons, who may be equally good, though they have a severer cast of temper; and I have desired her not to suspect the next religious man she meets of being either a drone or a hypocrite, because he may be either constitutionally grave, or may think it right to assume an exterior of greater strictness.

Since writing the above, I have just got a letter from my old friend Lady S. on other business.

You are named in it. I have a great mind to send you that part, as it will shew you that your conduct made no wrong impression. Little as she says, however, I am half afraid of sending it, as I am in disgrace with your sage friend H. from a parallel conduct, when I thought, as now, I was doing a mighty wise thing. If I am wrong, tell me so, for I am wrong upon system. I have not myself any vain curiosity to know what people at large think of me; but if there is any one over whom their good opinion may give me useful influence, I think it of importance. I intend this letter to convince you of my sincere friendship, if not of my wisdom. Of all compliments, I abhor religious compliments; and in writing to you on this subject, I have tried to speak as if it were of another person, and not of yourself. And now in return what shall *I* do? These people come to me: that I cannot help—but I do not go to them. My neighbour the Duchess of —— is not well, and wants me; but I can do her no good. Here I do but *little*, but a little is something. I think I have done with the aristocracy. I am no longer a debtor to the Greeks, but I am so to my poor barbarians.

God bless you, my dear Sir, prays,

Your obliged and affectionate,

HANNAH MORE.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 15, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

If I had followed the impulse of my feelings, I should have sent you by return of post my warmest thanks for your kind, most undeservedly kind letter. If you had treated me as I deserve, you would never have written to me again; but I am truly gratified whenever I find any one to whom I am truly attached, understanding me well enough not to make the punctuality of my correspondence a test of the sincerity of my friendship.

You cannot imagine, my dear Sir, how much comfort I derive from being assured that I and mine are frequently remembered by you at the throne of grace. I cannot express to you how much I stand in need of every support. Weak health, weak spirits, and weak faith, sometimes seem to concur in saying, "you take too much upon you;" and yet I seem to be carried through difficulties that appear insuperable, in a way that often fills me with wonder and gratitude. God is sometimes pleased to work by the most unpromising and unworthy instruments; I suppose to take away every shadow of doubt that it is his own doing. It always gives me the idea (if not too low and familiar,) of a great author writing with a very bad pen. You will be glad to hear that our work rather increases. I think our various schools and societies consist of about sixteen or seventeen hundred. This would

be comparatively little fatigue, if they lay near together, but our ten parishes lie at considerable distances, so that poor Patty and I have a diameter of above twenty miles to travel in order to get at them. In some of these parishes we dare not do all we wish, by reason of the worldly clergymen; who are now quiet and civil, but who would become hostile if we attempted in *their* parishes what we do in some others. In some of the most profligate places, we have had the most success; and where we chiefly fail, it is with your *pretty good kind of people*, who do not see how they can be better. I think it has pleased God to give us the most rapid progress in the parish we last took up, not above a year ago. This place has helped to people the county gaol and Botany Bay beyond any I know of. They seemed to have reached a sort of crisis of iniquity. Of nearly two hundred children, many of them grown up, hardly any had ever seen the inside of a church since they were christened. I cannot tell you the avidity with which the Scriptures were received by numbers of these poor creatures. Finding the heads of the parish, (farmers) quite as ignorant as their labourers, we devised a method, at the outset, of saving their pride, by setting apart one evening in the week on purpose for their instruction. Above twenty of them, including their wives, attend, and many seem to be brought under serious impressions.

One great benefit which I have found to result from our project is, the removal of that great gulf which has divided the rich and poor in these

country parishes; by making them meet together; whereas, before, they hardly thought they were children of one common father. Oh! how glad should I be to get you to preach to a little colony of colliers we have raised up. We have placed at the head of it a young collier of uncommon gifts, and, as I am willing to hope, of uncommon graces also; but as we have been sometimes disappointed after very promising beginnings, I have learned to rejoice with trembling. Unfortunately, the road to this place is so extremely bad, that a carriage cannot get to it, so that we are not able to go half as often as we could wish and ought; and when we do, it is through more fatigue than we can well bear, though Patty is far more heroic than I am.

I wish you could recommend us any fresh sermons, calculated for our sort of audience; they should be very awakening as to the matter, but simple and perspicuous as to the expression. Most, even of the spirited and striking ones I meet with, have still this fault,—they pre-suppose too much knowledge and education in the readers or hearers; now we want some which teach and refer to first principles, and which suppose the audience to know nothing. The books, I think, to which we return the oftenest, are those of Rowland, Alleine, and Walker of Truro; but even of these we are obliged to lower the style as we read, and substitute familiar words for hard ones. I do not flatter myself that we do much good; but the folly, the prejudice, the ignorance, the opposition, and the

various disappointments we sometimes meet with, serve at least to teach one a spirit of forbearance; and when we are coming home very tired at night, I often tell Patty that we ought to take comfort in thinking, that if we have done the people no good, we have got some good ourselves by such wholesome exercises of our patience and toleration. I sometimes tremble to think, that while busy in looking after the vineyards of others, "mine own vineyard have I not kept." Pray for me, my dear Sir, that I may have a more lively faith, a deeper humility, a spirit of more complete self-renunciation; that I may be more dead to the world, and more alive unto God.

I rejoice in the good and agreeable accounts you give of yourself, and hope your valuable health and life will be spared many years, and that your useful services in the church may be prolonged and extended. Pray remember me to Miss Catlett. I sympathise with yon in the loss of your dear assistant. All this family join in affectionate remembrances to you, with, dear Sir,

Your very faithful
and obliged friend,
H. More.

From H. More to her Sister.

London, 1796.

I am reading the life of Gibbon; it will disappoint two sorts of readers, for it is neither very wicked nor very entertaining, but rather dull, and

on the whole rather harmless; nay even instructive, as it shows the discomfort of his principles. I have paid my devoirs at Gloucester House, and was very cordially received; I have also been with Lady Euston, Lady Waldegrave, &c. We had more company in the afternoon than usual; among others, Mr. Morris, the American Ambassador to France; but he disliked the French, and they him; so, like a wise man, he came hither rather than remain with those virtuous republicans. I was introduced and had much conversation with him. He is a fine figure of a man, though one of his legs has been eaten up by a tiger. I also picked up a good *repository* friend, Archdeacon P—— of Shrewsbury, to whom I gave large instructions. The Duchess of Gloucester told me Captain Bedford's story about the poor sailor, who refused two guineas for saving a man's life, because the *little books* told him he must not be paid for doing good, but must do it for the love of God. Mrs. Carter I find healthier and younger than usual. I took an opportunity of talking much to Bishop Watson on the subject of his book, (in answer to Tom Paine,) when I lately passed an evening with him. I could tell him with great truth that I much admired it; but I told him also, that a shilling poison, like Paine's, should not have a four shilling antidote. He admitted it, but said, What could a poor Bishop with eleven children do? Besides, had it been cheaply printed, it would not have been so likely to be read by the great. I agreed with him that it was more calculated for the readers of Voltaire than those of Paine; yet he said

he was pleased that two butchers had been to his booksellers, and bought one each, and the next day one of them came and bought another. He told me that two impressions, one of a thousand, and another of fifteen hundred, had been sold. I asked him how he could in conscience treat Paine with respect, or like a sincere and honest man, and fairly told him I thought it wrong; but I suppose he did not care to offend Paine's political friends. Another Bishop (Percy) attacked me on the new spurious Shakspeare. I told him I had left off poetry, and had no curiosity about this great literary fraud. My want of taste shocked him. Mrs. H—— and I went the other day, and breakfasted with Mrs. Bouverie, and the old lady and the young one have struck up a friendship. I knew they would be pleased with each other, as I think there is some resemblance in their characters. Mrs. Garrick sends her love.

From H. More to her sister Martha.

Fulham Palace, 1796.

While you are labouring in your Sunday missions, I am idling my time with Lords and Commoners. Pitt and Wilberforce went together to Cambridge, whence the latter was to go on to Yorkshire. He declared his resolution not only to spend no money, but not even to canvass, on account of his weak state of health. I trust there will be no occasion. Our chief amusement here has been singing our new Repository Election song. Orme-

rod set it to music, and it was performed one day for the amusement of two bishops; the performers were all grave divines at Lord Cremorne's.

Lady Waldegrave asked me to go and stay a night with her in town, but as I had a cold, I got her to come here instead, and we had a four hours *tête-à-tête* yesterday morning. Did I ever tell you of the satisfaction Pitt expressed one day about our tracts? He said he had just heard that forty thousand had been sent to America, and he had not met with anything a long time that had pleased him more, than that such sort of reading was gaining ground in that country.

H. More.

The two following letters may be properly introduced here, notwithstanding the interval between their dates, on account of other circumstances which connect them together.

From Mrs. H. More to the late Duchess of Gloucester.

1796.

Madam,

I feel too sensibly the privilege of being permitted to have some occasional intercourse with your Royal Highness, not to avail myself sometimes of the permission. You appear to me to enter so sincerely into those important points which involve the highest interest of mankind; and to be so earnest in your investigation of religious truths, that I venture, without apology, to put into your

hands the little Essay which accompanies this letter. You will find the principles it inculcates strict, but I think the strictness is not carried further than the gospel rule imposes and enjoins; and it appears to me to be highly important, especially for young persons of very high rank, to be enabled and assisted properly to appreciate the real standard of moral truth, which Christianity has established; and that inferior, but more accommodating, and therefore more acceptable standard, which the world holds out to its votaries. In short it appears to me to be an object of no small importance, to get such a sound and fixed principle as shall remove that self-delusion which the world and all its pleasing blandishments are so calculated to excite in young and amiable hearts. However one may, for a time, be seduced by the manners and practices of gay society, it seems to me of the last importance, to preserve the *principle* pure, and to keep the *standard* high. I would therefore be particularly sedulous in inspiring young persons with a right view and a sound judgment in religious matters, even though I were sure they would be drawn into perpetual errors by their mixing with the world; because I never think any faults irreclaimable, or any dangers hopeless, while there is no perversion of principle, and no warp in the judgment. But when they cease to see things as they really are, to confound distinctions, to pervert principles, to call good evil, and evil good; then I always feel that the corruption has spread very far, and has not only seduced the passions, but darkened the intellect also.

It may be some recommendation of the Essay I send, to say that it was not written by a grave divine, but by one who lives in the world, and has, from youth and fortune, all its pleasures at command, though his piety leads him to a very abstinent use of them.

I hope White sent your Royal Highness '*The Riot,*' and '*Hints to all Ranks on the Present Scarcity,*' as they were written with a particular reference to these alarming times. In a little time I shall bring out a piece which I hope will be useful; it is called '*The Way to Plenty;*' its object is to convince the common people that their extreme poverty is caused still more by their own total want of economy than by the badness of the times. I have even descended to the minute details of management, in the hope of being serviceable to the mass of the people, though at the hazard of being blamed by my more polished and enlightened friends.

I have the honour to be, Madam,
Your Royal Highness's most obliged
and most obedient humble servant,
H. MORE.

From the same to the same.

Sept. 29, 1797.

MADAM,

I should not have been so tardy in expressing my acknowledgments for the very kind letter which I had the honour of receiving from your

Royal Highness, but that it found me on a sick bed, to which I have lately been pretty much confined. But as I am persuaded that sickness comes from the same wise and merciful hand which also dispenses health, I wish to be enabled to receive both with an equal temper of mind, convinced that that which is bestowed on me is precisely that which is best for me.

I should not, Madam, have been so presuming as to set out with talking of my insignificant self, in preference to the very interesting subjects of your Royal Highness's letter, did I not feel it my duty to account for my seeming inattention. In a general way, I verily believe that the multiplied instances of that crime, against which it is a great happiness to see Lord Kenyon so solemnly set his face, are in no small degree owing to the greedy and depraved appetite for novels. That shameful fashion which our writers of this class have adopted from the French, of choosing married persons for their heroes or heroines, adorning them with all the graces and accomplishments which can fascinate the fancy, bringing them into the most dangerous situations, embellished with the most pernicious descriptions, and making them commit the grossest crimes under the mask of sentiment, and with the apology of irresistible passion, or unsuitable alliance, or some other equally false and corrupt motive; this, I doubt not, has been one grand and leading cause of the corruption of principle which has lately so peculiarly disgraced our courts of justice, and made it almost dangerous for a lady of delicacy to look over a newspaper, for fear

of having her eyes offended with one of those disgusting trials. If your Royal Highness happens to have 'Cowper's Poems' at hand, I would beg leave to refer to the ninety-fourth page of the second volume, where you will see his pious indignation on this subject beautifully expressed with genuine good sense and truth.

The Bishop of London was so good as to shew me his improved Life of Archbishop Secker, in manuscript, when I was at Fulham. I warmly encourage the publication, as containing a just refutation of Bishop Hurd's reflections on Secker; but chiefly for the reason your Royal Highness assigns, as a very important one, namely, that it will probably set many people to read the Archbishop's works, who had either neglected or forgotten them. I have a great reverence for his talents and his virtues, and he appears to me to have possessed one faculty of high and singular importance for a writer on religion and morals,—I mean an acute intuitive knowledge of the human heart. I think one grand defect in many of our preachers, and one reason, though not the primary one, why they do so little good, is, that they do not attentively and accurately study human nature. One very distinguishing attribute of the great and Divine Preacher was, as the Apostle remarks, that 'he knew what was in man.' I cannot dismiss this subject without taking the liberty your Royal Highness is so gracious as to allow me, by expatiating a little on your remark that 'his sermons will do great good, because he is not too hard on the common

run of good sort of people.' I presume your Royal Highness does not mean that they will do *more* good, because of that. That it will cause them to be *more read*, I readily grant, but that it will cause them to do *more good*, I take the liberty to question. I have had the honour and the impertinence more than once, to hold some very lively and agreeable debates with your Royal Highness on this same *standard of right*, and on the difference (great and essential in the view of scripture) between *good sort of people, and good people.* You, Madam, however, have always conceded to me that there is no real goodness where there is no religion, and that there is no true religion but that religion which the gospel exhibits. I do not mean that any human being (with all those frailties and imperfections which still impede the best) can act up to the perfect pattern there exhibited. Even the best of the apostles, the saints and martyrs, fall short of it. But I must contend that every real Christian will endeavour to act on the *principle*, and in the *spirit* of the religion of Christ. He must labour after genuine piety and goodness, not for the praise of men, but for the glory of God. He must keep before his eyes, and labour after, a degree of perfection, which, however, he knows he shall never be able to attain. A continual sense of his many failings will serve to maintain him in humility,—the basis of all true religion. Such an one, I doubt not, who desires to do all he *can*, and renounces all merit in what he *does*, will most certainly be graciously accepted, in spite of the many weak-

nesses, imperfections, and even sins with which his best endeavours will be defiled. He knows that he himself is weak, but that his Redeemer is strong.

If I did not think it was pushing the subject too far for a letter, I would go on to remark that many persons in the New Testament, of whose future state we cannot entertain a very sanguine opinion, appear, in a worldly sense, to have been rather 'good sort of people.' The man at whose gate the beggar Lazarus lay, may be supposed to have been charitable as well as splendid. He who said, "Soul, take thine ease," and pulled down his barns to build greater, is not said to have acquired his vast affluence unjustly; and the Pharisee who thanked God that he was not as other men are, would probably have been reckoned in the number of amiable and *good sort of people* in St. James's Square; and some of the most respectable in the fashionable world would have been very glad to have gone to his dinners or his parties. The young ruler *was a very good sort of man indeed;* but he seems to have loved the world better than his Saviour; and we are left to indulge no very assured hope of his eternal happiness.

It is a proof that I entertain a high opinion of your Royal Highness's piety, as well as condescension, when I venture to touch so seriously and so largely on subjects which are generally, (I know not for what reason) thought too solemn for letters. If, Madam, you should however have the goodness at your leisure to tell me I have not presumed too far, it will be a great gratification to me.

It is with very serious satisfaction I reflect on the happy disposition of ——. I have been delighted to see her enter with zeal, earnestness, and ability, into topics which would not be interesting to one of her age and rank, had she not cultivated sound principles with sound sense, and with a seriousness and discernment which fill my mind with the most flattering hopes, that through the Divine grace she may *go on unto perfection*. I always use that word in a very qualified sense, even of the best human beings while they continue on earth.

I rejoice to see that your Royal Highness has so strong an idea of the power of intercessory prayer. I meet with some people, who though they allow great weight to prayer in one's own case, do not feel its importance in the case of others. The Bible abounds with instances to the contrary of their opinion; as in the case of Abraham, Moses, Elijah; in short it is clearly a scriptural injunction. I am under great concern for the death of Mr. Elliott. I knew few young men at once so amiable, so elegant, so pious—he was a real Christian!

To apologize for the length of this letter, would only be to make it longer. I throw myself on your clemency to forgive it, and remain, with every sentiment of gratitude and respect,

Your Royal Highness's very obliged
and most obedient humble servant,
H. More.

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